

DOC52PAPT1200047
QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY FEBRUARY 11, 2013 NO LATER THAN 5 P.M. LOCAL
TIME OF THE CONTRACTING OFFICER
ATTACHMENT A

1. Can you provide me with the due date for the proposal response for solicitation DOC52PAPT1200047 that was posted on FBO on 2/1/2013?

Ans: Amendment 0002 posted February 22, 2013 extended the proposal due date from March 4, 2013 no later than (NLT) 2 PM to March 21, 2013 NLT 2 PM local time of the Contracting Officer. To provide review time of Q&As, **Amendment 0003** is extending the due date for proposals to Thursday, March 28, 2013 NLT 2 PM local time of the Contracting Officer, Alexandria VA.

2. Will there be a site visit for this opportunity?

Ans: No, there will be no site visit. In lieu of a site visit, please see the link provided in Section L.5 "Video of Work Processes". A link providing an updated video with a closed caption feature was provided per Amendment 0001 on February 12, 2013.

3. What would be the due time (HH:SS) to submit our proposal?

Ans: Proposals should be submitted no later than 2:00 P.M. local time of the Contracting Officer, located in Alexandria, VA. Please see answer to Question #1.

4. Will there be a site visit for this opportunity?

Ans: See answer to Question #2.

5. Schedule B. What are the corresponding hours for the activities identified? CLIN 5 – are the estimated annual hours provided for each labor category?

Ans: The hours of operations will correspond to the needs of the office. It may change over the course of this contract. See revised Section B incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

6. C.2.2 Copying. What equipment and material is the contractor expected to provide?

Ans: Offerors are responsible for all costs associated with contractor furnished equipment (i.e. toner cartridges, paper, equipment maintenance etc.). In addition, Offerors are to provide any office supplies that are necessary for the completion of §C.2.2 with the exception of mailing envelopes, labels, and folders that will be provided by the Government. The Government will also be responsible for costs associated with government furnished equipment.

7. L.4 – Inquiries. Following the link provided to the USPTO site, I don’t’ see a place for answers to questions. If you click on the POSS solicitation on the USPTO site, it takes you back to FBO. Where on the USPTO site will the answers to questions be posted?

Ans: Answers to questions will be posted to http://www.uspto.gov/about/vendor_info/current_acquisitions/index.jsp as stated in the last paragraph under Section L.15.1 “Proposal Submission” which state that all changes, questions, and answers will be posted to this location. Answers will also be posted as an amendment in the Federal Business Opportunities under the subject solicitation. **See Amendment 0003.**

8. L.8 – Joint Venture Proposals. What’s the rationale for not accepting JV Proposals? In doing so, you are eliminating those Small Businesses that have SBA approved Mentor Protégé agreements and the corresponding JV’s in place.

Ans: The USPTO has determined that joint venture contractor arrangements are not in the best interest of the Government. Offerors are encouraged to seek teaming opportunities and therefore, does not limit competition.

9. L.5 – Video of Work Processes. The video appears to be defective. The audio is garbled – can’t understand most of it.

Ans: Based on several reviews of the associated video, no defects have been detected. However, it has been updated with a version that contains “closed caption” by Amendment 0001.

10. Attachment 7 - Please provide the quantities to be provided for the GFE items listed.

Ans: The quantities of furnished GFE will be based on the successful offeror’s proposal and solution. The government will provide the amount of GFE necessary to perform the requirement in this solicitation.

11. Also, is there an automated mail processing (sorting, postage applying, etc...) capability for inbound/outbound mail? If so, what brand/model machines (s) are there?

Ans: There is no automated mail processing system in place. Currently, the work is performed manually. Postage is not applicable to this solicitation.

12. Are there any security screening or scanning requirements for the mail?

Ans: The Mail Center contract is responsible for mail safety. Security screening or scanning is not applicable to this Solicitation.

13. Reference CLIN1

a. There is no quantity for Reference Refilling. Please provide volumes for this task.

Ans: The anticipated volume is zero. If the need arises, the work will need to be done under CLIN1 at the same pricing as File Maintenance.

b. What services in this CLIN apply to the Unit Price Staff Hour line and which labor category should we use to compute the hourly rate to be entered here?

Ans: The CLIN should be priced per document not Staff Hour. A revised Section B is incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

14. Reference CLIN3

a. No volume information is provided for incoming mail? Please provide volume for incoming mail.

Ans: 360,000 is an estimated yearly volume for incoming mail for CLIN3. Please see revised Section B incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

b. No hours are provided for the Staff Hours unit, which labor category should we use to compute the hourly rate to be entered here? Please provide hours and labor category.

Ans: See answer to Question 13B.

15. Reference CLIN5

a. Why are the estimated annual hours shown as 2,080 since the maximum hours that can be worked taken into considering holidays is only 2,000 hours per year?

Ans: The staff hours and labor categories under CLIN 5 are revised taking into consideration holidays identified in Section F.2 of the RFP. The hours and labor categories provided are for informational purposes only and the offerors should take into consideration such things as holidays, government's closing, etc. See revised Section B incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

b. No quantities are provided for labor categories. Since this support is provided "as required" are we just to provide an hourly rate for these labor categories?

Ans: Yes, offerors are to provide an hourly rate per year for each proposed labor category.

c. It would be helpful to know what the historical usage of this labor has been as well. Please provide this information.

Ans: The requirement has been revised from the current incumbent's contract and may be subject to further change based on fluctuations in usage by the USPTO. By "historical usage," if you are referring to the labor rates used by the incumbent contractor during the period of performance of the contract, this is considered information that is proprietary to the incumbent contractor.

d. Typist I and II are no longer in the DOL wage directory, should we substitute Word Processors? Please provide desired labor categories to be used in place of Typist I and II.

Ans: It is the responsibility of each offeror to determine the labor category necessary in meeting the contract requirement. FAR Clause 52.222-42 “Statement of Equivalent Rates for Federal Hires” is included in the solicitation for information purpose only. It identifies the classes of service employees expected to be employed under the contract if they were employed by the contracting agency.

e. Should the Data Entry Clerk proposed be a Level I or Level II?

Ans: Please see answer to Question 15D.

f. Should a labor category be included for a Driver and General Clerk I?

Ans: It is the responsibility of each offerors to determine the necessary labor category.

g. How are Supervisors billed under this CLIN?

Ans: Supervisors should be billed under CLIN 13 Project Management Staff – Patents.

h. Is the contractor limited to these labor categories or may we propose alternatives?

Ans: Yes, you may propose alternatives. Also, see answer to Question #14D.

i. Is there ever a requirement to work overtime in this CLIN?

Ans: In regards to CLIN 0005, there is no overtime. However, the office hours varies per Business Unit from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Hours are subject to change based on the needs of the business areas without prior notification. It is the responsibility of the offeror to provide sufficient staff to cover the hours needed by each Business Unit.

16. Reference CLIN6a and SOW C.2.6.1.

a. Only 2,080 hours are specified here however the SOW requires the Customer Service Window to be staffed daily from 8:30am until midnight? Please provided direction concerning this SOW and labor requirement.

Ans: It will be the offerors’ responsibility to propose the number of hours to cover the 8:30 a.m. until midnight hours as reference to CLIN6a. This CLIN has been revised to include suggested hours and labor categories. Also, see answer to Question #15a.

17. Reference CLIN 10

a. Are we to provide a price per application or a price per Staff Hour?

Ans: CLIN 10 is to be priced per application. Please see revised Section B provided under **Amendment 0003**.

18. Reference CLIN 12

a. No quantity is provided.

Ans: This is to be fixed priced on a monthly basis. Please refer to Section C.2.12 “Courier Support”.

b. Is the driver’s labor cost to be included in this CLIN?

Ans: CLIN 12 should include all cost associated with Courier Support.

19. Reference CLIN 13:

a. No quantity is provided. Please provide a quantity.

Ans: This is to be fixed priced on a monthly basis. Please refer to Section C.2.13 “Project Management”.

20. Reference SOW page 7, C.2. A reference is made to conducting “legal” reviews of patent contents. Can you expand on what type of legal reviews are required and the qualifications of staff members needed for this service?

Ans: Offerors are to refer to Attachment 3 – Formality Review Manual on the legal review of patent contents. It is the offeror’s responsibility to determine the performance of C.2.

21. Also reference page 52, section I.8 shows employee classes for Legal Examiners and Legal Document Review Clerks?

Ans: Section I.8 52.222-42 Statement of Equivalent Rates for Federal Hires provides labor categories and proposed wages as it relates to the Federal Government. However, this information as stated is for Information Purposes Only. Also, see answer to 15d.

22. Reference CLIN1, SOW Page 9, C.2.1 (f) and (k). Please confirm the contractor is compensated for housekeeping and maintenance of the search rooms based upon the Staff Hour rate provided in the Schedule B.

Ans: CLIN 1 is to be priced per document. Offerors are asked to submit a firm fixed-price proposal that encompasses all associated costs and performance risks.

23. General. Please provide the physical address of all buildings and the floor number of mail stops serviced by this contract. This information is needed to determine the mileage and delivery schedules.

Ans: Please see the attached hyper link for physical addresses for USPTO Alexandria Headquarters

<http://ptoweb.uspto.gov/oas/resources/buildings.htm>

Randolph Square Building (Shirlington) in Arlington, VA

2800 South Randolph Street
Arlington, VA 22206

24. General: Can you also furnish a copy of the existing messenger schedules?

Ans: No, however, please refer to Section C.2.3 for deliveries and pickups.

25. Reference CLIN2, SOW C.2.2. How many copy machines is the contractor required to furnish?

Ans: Section B provided estimated quantities and Section C provided turnaround times. Offeror should propose equipment and materials to fulfill the requirements based upon meeting the performance metrics. Proposed equipment and material is the responsibility of the offeror.

26. What is the size of the area provided to the contractor to establish the copy center needed to support this contract?

Ans: The current space is approximately 1800 s/f. The length of the wall space for the copier is 16 ft x 7 in. To prevent violation of any fire codes and 508 Compliance, the depth of the copier space is 6 ft x 3 in. Also, see answer to Question 25.

27. Reference CLIN3, SOW page 14-15, C.2.3.

a. Are there specific delivery times established for these messenger deliveries?

Ans: No, there are no specific times. Pickup should occur once in the morning and once in the afternoon in accordance with Section C, CLIN C.2.3. It is the responsibility of the offeror to determine pickup times.

b. Is free parking available at each of the specified locations?

Ans: Currently, free parking is provided in the garage at the Randolph Square Building (Shirlington) in Arlington, VA. However, this is subject to change without notice. Free parking is not available at the USPTO Alexandria Headquarter. Parking is the responsibility of the offeror. Parking for employees whose official duty station is USPTO Alexandria Headquarters is considered "commuting expense" and can't be charged as an Other Direct Cost (ODC). However, if it is offered as a benefit, it must be included in the offeror's overhead. If the free parking at the Randolph Square Building is discontinued, this could not be charged as an ODC as well.

28. Reference CLIN3, SOW page 14-15, C.2.3. Should messenger service be priced under CLIN12?

Ans: No. It should be priced under CLIN 3.

29. Reference CLIN5, SOW page 19-20, C.2.5. It is unclear what services provided here may also be provided under other CLINs, for example mail processing described here is also provided for in CLIN3 and CLIN6.

Ans: We do not understand your question. If you are referring to overlapping of duties, CLINs 3, 5, and 6 are separate tasks.

30. Can you provide the estimated or historical number of hours worked by each labor category?

Ans: See answer to Question #15c.

31. Reference CLIN 12, SOW page 32, C.2.12.

a. How many and what size of vehicles are required?

Ans: The proposed number and size of the vehicles for use is the responsibility of the offeror.

b. Is free overnight parking available for all contractor required vehicles?

Ans: Currently overnight parking is available at Randolph Square Building (Shirlington) Arlington, VA which is subject to change without notice. Parking is the responsibility of the offeror. Also, see answer to #27b.

32. Reference CLIN13, SOW page 32-33, C.2.13. It is unclear if the Supervisory staff other than the Project Manager and Operations manager is to be included in CLIN 13 or CLIN5? Please clarify.

Ans: Please see answer to Question #15g.

33. Reference Section L, page 81, third paragraph. If a contractor is not able to submit five relevant references and provides the certification specified here, how will this impact their evaluation? Please confirm this will not be cause to reject the offer.

Ans: Under Section L.15.4 "Past Performance", top of page 82, last sentence states "Those offerors who have NO past performance history will be given a Past Performance rating of neutral."

34. I am interested in the above solicitation. Could you please tell me the closing date and time?

Ans: Please see answer to Questions 1 & 3.

35. I went through the online profile for this opportunity and through the scope of work and I was unable to locate a confirmed deadline for response submission. Can you assist me with a due date?

Ans: Please see answer to Question 1.

36. I was wondering if the dates in the proposal Section L.10 were just for planning?

Ans: No, this is the final solicitation as stated in the description box in FedBizOpps.

37. Seek clarification for the submission of past performance references for proposed subcontractors and whether those references may be included in the required five references.

Ans: Of the five past performance references to be submitted, at least two (2) of the five (5) required past performance contract references must be from the offeror in the capacity of a prime contractor. Submission of past performance references for subcontractors may be submitted by an offeror who performed in the capacity of a subcontractor or by an offeror's proposed teaming partner. If offeror is submitting past performance from subcontractors, a signed teaming agreement must be submitted. See Section L.15.4.

38. This requirement is difficult for small businesses to meet while still qualifying as a small business, which may severely limit the field of competition.

Ans: Section L.15.4 requests that past performance references be for contracts whose value is equal to or greater than \$1,000,000 per year over the life of the contract. A threshold of \$1 million or more per year is substantially lower than the estimated contract life of Patent Office Support Services (POSS) procurement and reasonable in relation to this being a total small business set aside. Section L.15.4 also states "This evidence shall consist of a description and list of five (5) contract references (see paragraph a.2 below) within a three (3) year period from release date of the Request for Proposal that meet the currency and relevancy criteria as described below. For all references, contracts' value must be at \$1,000,000 or more per year over the life of the contract. References provided shall pertain to the proposing corporate organization (prime contractor)."

39. Section C.2.1 FILE MAINTENANCE, Page 10, Artifact Files: ..."The Contractor receives reports that list the applications in the OIPE File room that are in status 20 or higher and that need to be pulled and sent to the TC file room or the Files Repository". Question: Where does the reports to be received by the Contractor originate from? Are they generated automatically and sent to the Project Manager via email or through the PALM system?

Ans: The reports are located on the USPTO Intranet. Contractor will have access to those reports upon award.

40. Section, C.2.2 COPYING, Page 12, Technology Center Copying: ..."The Contractor is to provide the equipment and material to make these copies".

a. Question: Please provide a listing of the copiers that are currently in use on this contract, including the make, model number, and current location within each USPTO facility.

Ans: Copying is performed in the Remsen Building. Any equipment provided by the incumbent may be considered proprietary information to the incumbent's solution. Also, see answers to Questions #6, #25, #26.

b. Question: Please provide data on the total page count copied annually as well as the total number of pages copied (impressions). This information will be critical to ensure that the duplication technology is properly sized for the work load to be processed.

Ans: No historical data is available by page count. Please refer to Section B.2.

41. Section C.2.3 DOCUMENT RECEIPT AND MAIL, Page 14,

a. Question: At what times during the day does mail get delivered to the TC Mailroom in the Remsen Building Concourse level?

Ans: The approximate pickup and delivery times are between 10 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Mail pick-up and delivery is performed by a separate vendor. These times are subject to change.

b. Question: At what time does the mail dispatch to the USPS in the afternoon? In other words, what time does the USPS pick up the mail every afternoon?

Ans: See answer to 41a. Mail pick-up and delivery is performed by a separate vendor.

42. Section C.2.3 DOCUMENT RECEIPT AND MAIL, Page 14,

a. Question: What is the volume of incoming and outgoing mail that is handled under this contract on an annual basis?

Ans: See answer to Question #15. For the estimated quantities of incoming mail under this requirement, please see answer to Question 14. Also, see Section B for the estimated quantities for outgoing mail. Please see **Amendment 0003** for the incorporation of revised Section B.

b. Question: Is incoming mail subject to accountable mail tracking (as appropriate) through the use of any automated barcoding technology?

Ans: No, this is not applicable to this requirement. This is a function of the mail center contract.

c. Question: How is the incoming mail sorted – manually or through the use of automated sorting technology?

Ans: See answer to Question 11.

43. Section C.2.4 PRINT WORKING FILE, Page 19, (b) “The Contractor may be required to deliver the shredding bins to a designated location when pickup by the shredding contractor if scheduled”.

Questions:

a. Are these bins wheeled or will a hand truck be required?

Ans: The shredding bins are wheeled and provided under a separate contract.

b. Will the USPTO provide the hand truck if needed?

Ans: Currently, hand trucks are not needed. However, if the need arises, USPTO will provide hand trucks. See answer to Question #43a.

c. How often does the

Ans: We are unable to answer. This is an incomplete question.

44. Section C.2.6 INCOMING MAIL PROCESSING, Page 20, (c) “Several times each workday, mail is delivered to the OPAP open/sort area by the USPTO mail center”.

Question: Please provide the mail delivery schedule (times throughout each day).

Ans: Mail is delivered to OPAP Open/Sort once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Mail delivery time varies. Please see the answer to 41b.

45. Section C.2.7 FEE COLLECTION, Page 23, (2) “At the end of each workday, the contractor is required to generate from RAM a printout of that day’s work which will be used to reconcile that day’s transactions.”

a. Question: When the contractor is entering the various payment information from each application, does the system immediately perform the associated financial transaction such as charge the credit card or complete the ACH transfer or is there another process that is required to be handled by the contractor for the funds to be deposited into the USPTO account? If so, please explain.

Ans: Please refer to Attachment 1 of the solicitation – Ram Fee Document on the processing of all financial transactions.

b. Question: How are check payments handled?

Ans: See answer to Question 45a.

c. Does the contractor prepare deposits, endorse the backs with a stamp?

Ans: See answer to Question 45a.

d. How are these handled?

Ans: See answer to Question 45a.

46. Section C.2.9 PCT 371 NATIONAL STAGE DATA ENTRY AND MAILING, Page 29,
(a) “The government will complete the inspection within two (2) business days. If the government does not complete the inspection within two (2) business days, the contractor should initiate creation of the official notice.”

Question: How often does the government fail to complete the required task within the 2 day window?

Ans: We have never failed to complete inspection with 2 business days. However, we have already implemented the alternative process for inspection in accordance with Section C.2.9.B.

47. Section, C.2.12 COURIER SUPPORT, Page 32,

a. Question: What are the types of vehicles are currently used to support this contract? Please provide make and model number of each vehicle?

Ans: These vehicles are provided by the incumbent contractor. This information is unavailable and it may be considered proprietary to the incumbent contractor’s solution. Also, see answer to Question #31.

b. Question: How much mileage is accumulated on an annual basis, per vehicle (make and model)?

Ans: Vehicles are provided by the incumbent contractor, and this information is not available to the government.

c. Question: Is parking provided for each contractor provided vehicle free of charge and at what location?

Ans: See answers to Questions #27 and #31B.

48. Section PALM System, Page Various, At several places throughout the document there are references made to “if the PALM system is not available” or “for possible PALM problems”. Please provide an explanation of the nature of the system failures, the frequency in which they occur, the average amount of downtime that occurs during each outage, etc.

Ans: PALM System downtime during USPTO operational hours is unusual. PALM is not tracked as a separate system but does provide critical services to many USPTO critical systems that are tracked. Critical system availability was 99.16% in 2012.

49. Attachment 7, GFE Listing:

a. Please expand upon this listing to provide make, model number, and location of each provided equipment unit.

Ans: See answer to Question #10.

b. Are mail carts provided?

Ans: Yes.

50. Reference: RFP Section B, CLIN 1, RFP Section C.2.1 Artifact Files (a) - File Maintenance, and Attachment 7 – Government Furnished Equipment

“Each Artifact File contains a machine readable bar code label containing the application serial number and the appropriate alpha suffixes.”

Question: Are the label printers listed in Attachment 7 bar code label printers?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: Yes.

51. Reference: RFP Section B, CLIN 1, RFP Section C.2.1 Artifact Files (a) - File Maintenance, and Attachment 7 – Government Furnished Equipment

“Each Artifact File contains a machine readable bar code label containing the application serial number and the appropriate alpha suffixes.”

Question: Does the government supply bar code readers?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: Yes.

52. Reference: RFP Section B, CLIN 2 and RFP Section C.2.2 Copying

“The Government will provide space in the Remsen building at USPTO's Alexandria campus for contractor personnel and equipment in support of this requirement.”

Question: Does the government also require high volume printing in the Shirlington, VA location?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: No.

53. Reference: RFP Section B, CLIN 3 and RFP Section C.2.3 Document Receipt and Mail

“The contractor shall sort all incoming mail, deliver it to designated locations, and place it in the appropriate mail boxes or other areas.”

Question: Is the contractor required to supply the “mail carts and dollies” to facilitate this?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: See answers to Question #43b and #49b.

54. Reference: RFP Section B Fee Collection, CLINs 7a and 7b; C.2.7(b) - Other
“As appropriate, the contractor will back out previously paid fees and/or will process refunds to applicants or their attorneys, agents and/or representatives.”

	Fee Collection						
7	New Applications						
7a	Estimated Annual Qty						
	US	Application	35,000	33,000	31,000	29,000	28,000
	PCT	Application	5,100	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
	Unit Price	Application					
	Total Price						
	Other						
7b	Estimated Annual Qty						
	US	Document	78,000	74,000	70,000	67,000	64,000
	PCT	Document	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
	Refunds Processed	Refund	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
	Unit Price	Document					
	Total Price						

A. Question: The Government indicates that on CLIN 7b there is a refund process. On CLIN 7a the government indicates there are zero refunds processed. Will the government confirm that on CLIN 7a there are not expected any refunds to be processed?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: Refunds will be processed under CLIN 7b.

55. Reference: RFP Section B, CLIN 8 and RFP Section C.2.8 - Formality Review
“The Office plans to move to a text based application processing system. One (1) goal of the system is to automate as much of the formalities review process as practical. During the life of the contract, the application format, software, and procedures used for formalities review may change significantly.”

	Formality Review						
8	Estimated Annual Qty						
	Total New Processed	Application					
	Unit Price	Application					
	Total Price						
8a	New Applications						
	Utility	Application	370,000	405,000	430,000	460,000	480,000
	Design	Application	30,000	32,000	34,000	36,000	38,000
	Provisional	Application	120,000	130,000	140,000	150,000	160,000
	USPTO form SB/69	Application	800	1,200	1,600	2,000	2,400
	Unit Price	Application					
	Total Price						

A. Question: We request that the Government provide any type of estimated timelines for planning purposes.

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: The government will provide adequate lead time before implementing any new application system or change in requirement for this process.

56. Reference: RFP Section B, CLIN 8 and RFP Section C.2.8 - Formality Review

“The contractor will review the documents for correct signature, title, application number, and proper language. The contractor will record authorizations in PALM and send notices for defective requests.

The USPTO may add additional patent offices to this document sharing arrangement. The contractor will review and process responses to notices and various other correspondence. If the application fails to meet the requirements within required time periods, the contractor will process the abandonment or termination of the application.”

	Formality Review						
8	Estimated Annual Qty						
	Total New Processed	Application					
	Unit Price	Application					
	Total Price						
8a	New Applications						
	Utility	Application	370,000	405,000	430,000	460,000	480,000
	Design	Application	30,000	32,000	34,000	36,000	38,000
	Provisional	Application	120,000	130,000	140,000	150,000	160,000
	USPTO form SB/69	Application	800	1,200	1,600	2,000	2,400
	Unit Price	Application					
	Total Price						

Question: Will the government provide historical data or government estimates on the quantity of applications annually reviewed by the formality review section?

Justification: The government states that the contractor will review applications for completeness and compliance. Schedule B CLIN 8 shows zero estimated quantity of applications.

Ans: Please see answer to Question #15c. CLIN 8a of Section B is revised and the change is incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

57. Reference: RFP Section C.2.8(e) - Formality Review

“The Office expects increased participation in the electronic notification process so the volume of work mailed in paper may decline over the life of the contract. The USPTO may change the mailing processes and integrate this mailing into an automated centralized mailing system that would allow the Office to obtain discounts on postage and other benefits.”

Question: Will the Government provide more details regarding the planning of this move such as timelines, estimated changes in quantities and volumes of mail?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: The government will provide adequate lead time for changes in the process or before implementing any new work requirement under this Solicitation.

58. Reference: RFP Section C.2.8.1(a) - Initial Formality Review of New Utility, Plant, Reissue or Re-Examination Design, and Provisional Applications

“The government currently processes reissue and re-examination applications but may turn this work over to the contractor during the life of this contract.”

Question: Will the Government provide more details regarding the planning of this move such as timelines, estimated changes in quantities, and estimated areas of reduction/increase?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: See answer to Question 57.

59. Reference: RFP Section B, CLIN 11, RFP Section C.2.11 PCT Printing and Mailing, and Attachment 5.b Sequence Listing CD Burning

“The contractor will also make electronic copies (e.g. CD) for some international organizations or for certain electronic files such as biological sequence listings (Attachment 5.2).”

Question: Does the government supply blank CDs?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: Yes.

60. Reference: RFP Section B Courier Support, CLIN 12 and Section C.2.12 – Courier Support

“To support file retrieval and delivery and movement of other documents and fees, the contractor must provide courier service between the USPTO buildings in Shirlington and Alexandria, this may include adding delivery locations near the USPTO campus, but not in USPTO leased space. The courier service will have unlimited pickups and deliveries and must occur at each location a minimum of once each morning and once each afternoon. Other pickups/deliveries must occur as needed to meet the requirements of this statement of work. Additional times and/or USPTO locations may be requested by the COTR.”

12	Courier Support						
	Estimated Annual Qty	Month					
	Unit Price (per month)	Vehicle					
	Total Price						

Question: The Government indicates that the contractor must provide courier service between USPTO building in Shirlington and Alexandria, and this may include addition locations near USPTO. The Government also states that this will have unlimited pickup and deliveries, as well as the “as needed” aspect. However, Schedule B indicates zero quantities’ of actions on this CLIN. Will the government provide historical data on courier support activity for assessment by bidders?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: This service is being provided by the incumbent contractor as stated in the requirement above and the data is not required under the current contract nor is the data available to us. This information may be considered proprietary by the incumbent.

61. Reference: RFP Section B, CLIN 13 and RFP Section C.2.13(b) Project Management
“The Project Manager and Operations Manager shall be the primary point of contact for the Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR).”

a. Question: Will the Project Manager, Operations Manager, and support staff be provided on-site offices?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: All direct charged personnel under this requirement shall receive office space with the exception of the courier. We are not providing space for overhead support personnel, etc.

62. Reference: RFP Section B – CLIN 14 – Transition Costs; and RFP Section F.3 – Period of Performance

14	Transitioning Plan*						
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*If Offeror does not intend to charge the USPTO, enter “NSP” under the “Base Year” column

“F.3 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

Base Period: July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

Option Period 1: July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

Option Period 2: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

Option Period 3: July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

Option Period 4: July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018”

A. Question: Will the Government please define an expected duration for the Transition Period.

Justification: The Government has provided a CLIN for Transition Costs (CLIN 14) but in the Performance Periods, presented in RFP Paragraph F.3, there is no indication of the Government's expected length of the Transition Period.

Ans: The Government estimates a 30 to 45 day transition period. However, it the offeror's responsibility to propose the amount of time needed for transition.

63. Reference: RFP Section C.2.3(s) Document Receipt and Mail

“The contractor is required to plan his work to account for possible PALM problems and to accomplish required turnaround times despite high volumes of work normally encountered just before and immediately after "count Monday." Note: See Attachment 6 for definition “count Monday.”

A. Question: This requirement implies that PALM problems will regularly occur during execution of this contract. The Government asks the contractor to plan around these

unplanned possible down times despite high volumes. Will the Government provide metrics on historical PALM outages to allow for requested forward planning?

Justification: To support a clear understanding of the size and complexity of this effort.

Ans: See answer to Question 48.

64. Reference: RFP Section C.2.5(a) General Support

“Receptionists will work 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.”

A. Question: The Solicitation Schedule B only indicates a minimal – one man year – amount of assessed hours. Will the government please provide more granularity regarding the contractor place of work, type of work, and quantity of work based on government collected historical data?

Justification: To support a clear understanding of labor resource requirements.

Ans: See answer to Question 5. Type, place, and quantity of work are based upon each organization listed under Section C.2.5(a) and (b).

65. Reference: RFP Section C.2.6 (b) Incoming Mail Processing

“The contractor shall retrieve and process documents printed on the fax printing government furnished equipment.”

A. Question: The Government state that the fax printing equipment related to this CLIN is Government Furnished Equipment (GFE). The government fails to address if the paper and toner cartridges for this equipment are GSF or contractor provided. Will the government clarify if the toner and paper for the fax printers under this CLIN are GSF or contractor provided?

Justification: To support a clear understanding of contractor-required equipment and supplies.

Ans: The USPTO provides toner and paper for all GFE.

66. Reference: RFP Section C.2.6(d) Incoming Mail Processing

“The contractor will identify specific types of computer media containing Computer Readable Form (CRF) of biotechnological sequences listings in new applications and follow-on documents and deliver them to the (CRF) processing staff. The contractor should keep a log recording the application number, effective receipt date, and date delivered to the CRF processing staff. In the future, the government plans to load additional types of documents to USPTO systems instead of creating artifact files. The contractor may receive new procedures to identify and direct such electronic media or load them to a USPTO system. The contractor will identify and load CRF files on CD for PCT applications into the POWER system prior to forwarding to the CRF processing staff.”

A. Question: The Government describes the process of dealing with specific type of computer media related to the applications and follow-on documents. Will the Government provide (1) historical information concerning the quantity of items and the resultant creation of Artifact files; and (2) information on when during the life of the contract the artifact file creation will be reduced?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: See answers to Questions #15c and #55.

67. Reference: RFP Sections C.2.7 – Fee Collection: Other

“C.2.7 FEE COLLECTION (CLIN 7: Base year, Option Year 1, Option Year 2, Option Year 3, and Option Year 4).

(a) New Applications

b. Other (CLIN 7b: Base Year, Option Year 1, Option Year 2, Option Year 3, and Option Year 4)”

A. Question: The RFP appears to have a change in paragraph numbering at this point. In addition, the “Other” paragraph notes that it is CLIN 7b. We note that although Section B does contain a CLIN 7a, it is not reflected in the SOW language. Will the government review the C.2.7 requirement to ensure correct paragraph numbering, as well as confirm the accuracy of CLIN numbering for the “Other” paragraph?

Justification: Supports justification of costing reasonableness and completeness

Ans: Section C.2.7 is renumbered and the change is incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See Revised RFP.

68. Reference: RFP Section C.2.7(a) New Applications and RFP Section C.2.7(b) Other

“The contractor will utilize personal computers to post application fees to the RAM financial system.”

“As required by the Government, the contractor will utilize government provided personal computers to post to the RAM financial system various fees received in the USPTO and not associated with the initial receipt and processing of a patent application (e.g., petition fees, extension of time fees, issue fees).

A. Question: We request that the Government clarify the definitions of (1) personal computer; and (2) Government provided personal computer, and indicate whether this equipment is considered GFE?

Justification: To support a clear, concise understanding of the POSS Requirements.

Ans: The terms personal computer and Government provided personal computer are interchangeable. This is GFE. This change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

69. Reference: RFP Sections C.2.13(c) and C.2.13(d) – Project Management

“The contractor shall provide a management structure that may include managers, supervisors, and team leads sufficient to supervise and lead the production personnel. The production management personnel shall be on-site during the day-time business hours worked by their personnel. Contractor personnel working under the general clerical support CLIN will typically receive day-to-day direction from an authorized government representative.”

“The contractor’s management team will be responsible for measuring quality and timeliness and ensuring that the production timeliness and quality requirements are met. The management team will be responsible for workflow and responding to government requests to process work.”

A. Question: To clarify project management roles and responsibilities, would the Government consider changing the last sentence in paragraph C.2.9(c) as follows: “Contractor personnel working under the General Clerical Support CLIN (CLIN 5) will typically receive day-to-day guidance from an authorized government representative after coordination with the contractor management team.”

Justification: Normally under Service Contracts the Government does not provide contractor supervision. The wording in requirement C.2.9(c) indicates that the Government will provide such direction without coordination with contractor management, team leads, etc. Then, in requirement C.2.9(d), the contractor management team is held responsible for timeliness, quality and workflow but may not have insight into CLIN 5 (general clerical support) priorities because the Government is providing direction.

Ans: The change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

70. Reference: RFP Section I.6 and I.6 – Contract Clauses

“L.6 52.217-8 OPTION TO EXTEND SERVICES (Nov 1999)

L.7 52.217-9 OPTION TO EXTEND THE TERM OF THE CONTRACT (Mar 2000)”

A. Question: These clauses should be I.6 and I.7

Justification: To verify a clear understanding of the Contract Clauses.

Ans: Yes, clauses 52.217-8 and 52.217-9 should be I.6 and I.7 respectively. The revision is incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. Please see revised RFP.

71. Reference: RFP Section H.4.(d) INSURANCE COVERAGE - “Aircraft Public and Passenger Liability

“When aircraft are used in connection with performing the contract, the Contractor shall have aircraft public and passenger liability insurance. Coverage shall be at least \$200,000 per person and \$500,000 per occurrence for bodily injury, other than passenger liability, and \$200,000 per occurrence for property damage. Coverage for passenger liability bodily injury shall be at least \$200,000 multiplied by the number of seats or passengers, whichever is greater.”

A. Question: This requirement implies that the Contractor is required to operate aircraft and ferry passengers. Will the Government consider changing this clause to be required only when Commercial Air Transportation is used?

Justification: To verify a clear understanding of the Insurance Requirements.

Ans: This is standard insurance clause and applies when applicable. See Far Clause 28.307-2. This clause will not be changed.

72. Reference: RFP Section L.15.2 – General Instructions for the Preparation of Proposals, Third Sentence

“The type for all documents submitted (excluding charts and graphs which may be submitted as foldouts to the proposal) shall be black, shall not exceed 12 characters per linear inch or exceed 6 (six) lines per vertical inch and shall be at least ten (10) point.”

A. Question: Please clarify this statement regarding the use of color in graphic illustrations, including logos.

Justification: Color graphics usually help to ‘break-up’ the text for aesthetics.

Ans: Black or color graphic illustrations may be used. This change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. Please see revised RFP.

73. Reference: RFP Section L.15.2 – General Instructions for the Preparation of Proposals

A. Question: Understanding that our response consists of two (2) Volumes, will the Government consider providing Titles for the Volumes, such as Volume 1 – Technical Proposal and Volume 2 – Price Proposal?

Justification: This addition will support our proposal development process

Ans: Paragraph L.15.2 adequately describes the format for the volumes. Offerors may label volume 1 as “Volume 1 – Technical Proposal” and volume 2 as “Volume 2 – Price Proposal.”

74. Reference: RFP Section L.15.2 – General Instructions for the Preparation of Proposals

“Volume 2: (1 original and three (3) copies; two (2) CD ROM copies in Microsoft Excel)

- Price Proposal - A completed Section B of the RFP, entitled Supplies/ Services and Prices”, with supporting detail*
- A signed RFP cover page, along with signed cover pages of all Amendments to the RFP*
- A completed Section K “Representations and Certifications” or reference that current reps and certs are on Systems Award Management System (SAMS) (a component of the proposal)”*

a. Question: Since the signed RFP Cover Page, along with the RFP Amendments will require signatures of the corporation, will the Government consider allowing us to submit these documents in .pdf format?

Justification: To support corporate security of officers' signatures who may commit the company.

Ans: .pdf format is acceptable for the CD ROM contents. However, the price proposal is required in Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. However, original signatures are needed for all hardcopies. This change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

75. Reference: RFP Section L.15.3.5 Key Personnel

"Each resume should be accompanied by a letter of commitment letter shall not exceed 3 pages"

a. Question: Is the Letter of Commitment included in the three (3) page count for each Key Personnel resumes?

Justification: Assure compliance with page limitations.

Ans: Yes.

76. Reference: RFP Section B – CLINS 5 and 6a

5	General Clerical Support						
	Estimated Annual Qty	Hour	2,080	2,080	2,080	2,080	2,080
	Labor Category:						
	Receptionist						
	Receptionist -Typing						
	Secretary I						
	Secretary II						
	Secretary III						
	Typist I						
	Typist II						
	Data Entry Clerk						
	General Clerk II						
	General Clerk III						
	Dockets Receptionist						
6a	Customer Service Window	Staff Hour	2,080	2,080	2,080	2,080	2,080
	Unit Price	Staff Hour					
	Total Price						

A. Question: We ask that the Government consider changing the guidance in Section B associated with the two referenced CLINs, using the following suggestions:

Microsoft Excel has a formula for determining number of workdays in a year and thus the number of actual available hours. This formula is:

= NETWORKDAYS(start date, end date).

Using this formula, the number of work days and thus actual available hours are as follows. (Note: This formula takes into account when the weekends occur during the year.) The calculations below indicate a contract year from 01 July through 30 June of the following year as directed in the RFP.

Period	Work Days	Available Hours
Base Year	261	2,088
Option Year 1	261	2,088
Option Year 2	262	2,096
Option Year 3	261	2,088
Option Year 4	260	2,080

Justification: The Section B document for the Final RFP indicates that the Government wants bidders to propose 2080 annual hours in CLINs 5 and 6a. This would equate to bidding 52 weeks at 40 hours per week ($52 \times 40 = 2080$). However, no year has 52 weeks. A 365 day year equates to 52.17 weeks (52 weeks plus one day) and leap years at 366 days equate to 52.28 weeks (52 weeks plus 2 days). In a fixed price environment, a bidder who is required to bid only 2080 hours, but yet must pay his employees for the actual available hours in a year, could be forced to sacrifice proposed profit for as much as 40 hours pay for all employees over the life of this contract. This places an unwarranted burden on the successful bidder.

Ans: No, §B will not be changed. See answers to Questions #15a and #16.

77. Reference: RFP Section L.15.4.a.1 – Past Performance (Volume 1, Section 2), Second Sentence

“For all contract references to have a value of \$1M or more per year over the life of the contract.”

a. Question: Will the Government consider a more direct method that requires one of the five (5) contract references have an annual value of \$10M - \$15M and delete the requirement of \$1M per year?

Justification: Selecting a contract value of \$10M - \$15M per year on a single past performance reference more closely aligns with the requirement and eliminates any debate on the offers ability in regards to size and scope.

Ans: No.

78. Sections B & C, Would the USPTO provide, for each CLIN the primary work location(s) – excluding those CLINs where moving between locations is required (i.e. Courier Services)?

Ans: Please see below:

(Alexandria and Shirlington location)

CLIN 1 – File Maintenance

CLIN 5 – General Clerical Support

CLIN 12- Courier Support

CLIN 13 – Project Management Staff - Patents

(Alexandria – Concourse level of Remsen Building)

CLIN 2 – Copying

CLIN 3 – Document Receipt & Mailing

CLIN 4 – Print Working File

CLIN 6 - Central Fax (*This location is subject to change.)

(Alexandria – Randolph Building)

CLIN 6a – Customer Service Window

(Shirlington location on both 6th and 7th floor)

CLIN 6 – Incoming Mail Processing

CLIN 7a-b- Fee Collection

CLIN 8a-b – Formality Review

CLIN 9 - PCT 371 BIB Data Entry and Mailing

CLIN 10 - PCT International BIB Data Entry

CLIN 11 - PCT Printing and Mailing

79. Attachment 7, Would the USPTO provide any more detail regarding GFE than that provided in the attachment file

“Attachment_7_Government_Furnished_Equipment_List.pdf”?

Ans: See answer to Question 10.

80. Schedule B, pg. 2 & Section C.2.1, pgs. 9-10, paragraphs (h)-(k), Section C.2.1 File Maintenance (CLIN 1) includes PCT File Room activities (pg. 9-10, paragraphs (h)-(k)), but it does not appear under CLIN 1 on Schedule B. Would USPTO provide estimated quantities for PCT File Room activities?

Ans: All the maintenance of the files were merged into Artifacts Retrieval & Re-filed under CLIN 0001. Please see the estimated volumes for CLIN 0001.

81. Section C.2.3, pg, 15, paragraph (e), C.2.3. (e) states that the contractor will “scan the document using government furnished equipment.” Does the GFE used to produce PDFs reside on the USPTO network and allow for electronic transmission of the PDF files?

Ans: Yes. Please refer to Section C.2.3(e).

82. Section C.2.3., pg. 16, paragraph (g), In C.2.3. (g), it states that office actions may need to be returned to “Government” and/or “Government Representative.” We understand

this to refer to the originator of the office action, thus requiring the action to be returned to their office or examiner mailbox. Is this correct?

Ans: No. Please refer to Section C.2.3(g).

83. Section C.2.3., pg. 17, paragraph (n), C.2.3. (n) states that “the contractor must insure that these documents are processed in sufficient time for the Mail Center...” Would the USPTO clarify how the contractor determines what is “sufficient time”? Is there a specific cutoff time or does it vary with daily volume fluctuations requiring regular collaboration with Mail Center staff?

Ans: “Sufficient Time” refers to mailroom pick up time. The daily volumes fluctuate during count and non-count week. Also, please see answers to Questions #41a.

84. Section C.2.5., pg. 20, paragraph (b) & Schedule B, pg. 3, Schedule B estimates 2,080 hours per year for CLIN 5, which approximates to one (1) staff position, yet C.2.5 (b) indicates that at least three (3) staff personnel would be required. Is this one (1) staff position whose requirements change day-to-day, as suggested by C.2.13(c) on page 33, or are there more resources required? Please clarify.

Ans: A total of 17 General Clerk Support Staff is needed under Section C.2.5 between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Hours are subject to change based on the needs of the business areas without prior notification. Also, see answer to Question #15a. This change has been incorporated into **Amendment 0003**. Please see revised RFP.

85. Section C.2.7b, pg. 24, paragraph (4),

a. Would the government provide clarification suggesting how contractor would reconcile EFS Web auto fee collections versus fees posted to RAM, as required by C.2.7.b(4)?

Ans: See answer to Question 45a.

b. Are there reports available in each system to compare against one another in serial number order?

Ans: Yes.

86. Section C.2.8.2., pg. 28, paragraph (f), Would USPTO provide clarification regarding the extent to which “other application documents” need to be reviewed to determine if there is proper language provided for these authorizations?

Ans: “Other application documents” refer to documents that are equivalent to the SB/69 in which authorizes or grant permission to USPTO to capture European Patent Office (EPO) requests.

87. Section D.1, pg. 34, Our understanding is that D.1 is primarily intended to provide requirements for correspondence between the contractor’s program office and the USPTO,

such as management reports, and does not apply to day-to-day work products for which requirements are specified in the Statement of Work. Is this correct?

Ans: Yes.

88. Is the Incumbent eligible to bid since this is a small business set aside?

Ans: The USPTO will not comment on a particular firm's eligibility to participate in this procurement. Any size determinations that are in question or challenged will be forwarded to the Small Business Administration (SBA) who is responsible for determining size standards.

89. Will this Solicitation be subject to FAR 7.305 – Nondisplacement of Qualified Workers Under Service Contracts - and the current incumbent contractor staff be given the right of first refusal?

Ans: FAR 7.305 is not applicable to the incumbent's contract as it does not involve a conversion of in-house performance to contract performance of work. POSS is a follow-on or recompetition of contractor performed work. However, the incumbent's contract does include FAR Clause 52.237-3 "Continuity of Services" and it is expected that the incumbent contractor will abide by the clause and allow as many personnel as practicable to remain on the job to help the successor maintain the continuity and consistency of the services required by the contract.

90. Reference Solicitation Schedule B CLIN 5.

a. Our interpretation is that the contractor shall only price one unadjusted staff year (2,080 hours) of labor for each labor category identified in Section B, CLIN 5 of the RFP. Is this interpretation consistent with the Government's intention?

Ans: See answer to Question #15a.

91. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.1 FILE MAINTENANCE: "If PALM is nonoperational, incoming files should not be refilled until the PALM information can be updated."

a. What is the average time per year during standard work hours that PALM is nonoperational?

Ans: See answer to Question #48.

92. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.1 FILE MAINTENANCE: "The Government also may require the contractor to inventory the contents of any or all of the artifact file areas."

a. Will the Government issue task orders for requirements specified in the Solicitation Section C that are not asked by the Government to be priced in the Solicitation Section B?

Ans: No, only one task order will issued monthly which will encompass all work required.

93. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.1 FILE MAINTENANCE: “ (e) The contractor shall meet all turnaround times and shall perform the work at a minimum accuracy level of 99%. The Government will randomly inspect the quality and timeliness of the contractor's work.”

a. Are the PTO business process management and tracking tools currently in place robust enough for contractors to manage and evaluate their own performance against the service levels specified throughout the solicitation or must the contractor bring its own tools to manage contractor processes and validate or verify performance?

Ans: Regardless of the Government’s methodologies or tools that may used to inspect the contractor’s work, the contractor is expected to have its own quality assurance plan to ensure contract requirements are met.

94. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.2 COPYING: “The government may also make periodic requests for high volume copies.”

a. Can the Government please specify the maximum surge capability that the contractor must be capable of sustaining in terms of pages per day?

Ans: Quantities from day to day vary. The requirement has been revised from the current contract and is subject to further changes based on fluctuations in usage by the USPTO. Please see the revised schedule B under Section C.2.2 the unit has changed from images to pages. This change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**.

95. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.2 COPYING: “The contractor is required to provide the equipment and material to make these copies.”

a. Can the Government please publish the specifications for all equipment that must be provided by the contractor including throughput, paper sizes, installation parameters associated with building size limitations, power, cooling, etc.?

Ans: Please see answers to Questions #6, #25 and #26.

96. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.2 COPYING: By “material” does the Government require the contractor to supply all paper and printer supplies?

Ans: No. Please see answers to Questions #6 and #65.

97. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.2 COPYING: Does PTO have a requirement for color copying?

Ans: No.

98. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.2 COPYING: How many copiers are currently being used to meet the requirements?

Ans: Information related to any equipment or supplies provided by the incumbent is considered proprietary to their solution. Also, see the answers to Questions #6, #25 and #26.

99. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.2 COPYING: What are the specifications of the current copiers and are the copiers adequate to meet the current demand?

Ans: See answer to question #98.

100. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.2 COPYING: “The Government will provide space in the Remsen building at USPTO’s Alexandria campus for contractor personnel and equipment in support of this requirement”.

a. Can the Government please provide the space layout, power capacity and the number of workstations and other equipment being provided?

Ans: In the space for copying, there are computer workstations, OACS network printers, central fax printers, office phones, etc. provided by USPTO. The USPTO provides all envelopes, folders and label for folders under this CLIN. The offeror is responsible for the necessary equipment and materials needed under this CLIN. Any other consumable or office supplies are the offeror’s responsibility to determine what is needed to successfully perform this requirement. Also, see answers to Questions #6, #25 and #26.

101. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.2 COPYING: “At least once in the morning and once in the afternoon of each workday, the contractor is required to pick up from designated locations red or colored action folders containing office actions to be copied, mailed, and scanned.” [and] “At least once in the morning and once in the afternoon of each workday, the contractor is required to pick up from designated locations pink or colored action folders containing office actions to be copied, mailed, and scanned.”

a. Throughout the Solicitation, there are numerous references to pick up and drop off at designated locations. Can the government please confirm that the total number of pick up and drop off locations are as specified in the Solicitation [defined locations]:

“Internal Tech Center locations

- **Director's office,**
- **Examiner mailboxes (not individual examiner offices), Service Centers**
- **Classification unit,**
- **Head Supervisory Legal Instruments Examiner (HSLIE) offices**
- **Paralegal office,**
- **Special Program Examiner (SPRE) office,**
- **Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) offices,**
- **Tech Support Team Leader,**
- **License and Review.**

Other USPTO Locations

- COTR,
- Office of Human Resources,
- Scientific and Technical Information Center,
- File Information Unit (FIU)-Record Room,
- Office of Petitions,
- Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners for Patents,
- Office of Patent Application Processing
- PCT Operations,
- Office of Data Management,
- Patent Academy.”

Ans: These are the primary locations, however, occasionally there may be requests from other business units for pickup and delivery. Please see C.2.3.d.

102. Can the Government please specify the number of Examiner mailboxes and Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) offices?

Ans: We are not able to provide the number of mailboxes. Also, please see answer to Question #101.

103. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.3 DOCUMENT RECEIPT AND MAIL: “(b) The contractor shall sort all incoming mail, deliver it to designated locations, and place it in the appropriate mail boxes or other areas.” [also] “All incoming mail shall be delivered within two (2) work hours of receipt in the mailroom.”

a. What is the average time it takes to complete a mail run? Is the POSS contractor to sort and deliver all PTO incoming and outgoing mail or are there other contractors with mail administration responsibilities and, if so, what is the approximate POSS percentage of involvement?

Ans: The average time to complete a mail run is not available. If you are referring to the incumbent’s time to complete a mail run, this information may be considered proprietary to the incumbent. The mail center contract is responsible for sorting all USPTO’s incoming and outgoing mail. Any mail received related to this requirement is further sorted by the POSS contractors. The approximate percentage of involvement is not available.

104. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.3 DOCUMENT RECEIPT AND MAIL: “The contractor will evaluate error messages and take steps to identify defective documents and take appropriate action to obtain replacements.”

a. What percentage of throughput typically incurs an error? When an error occurs, what is the average time needed to take steps to identify defective documents and take appropriate action to obtain replacements?

Ans: There is no data available on the percentage of errors or the average time to identify a defective document. However, once errors are identified, immediate action is necessary to obtain replacements. Please see C.2.3(g).

105. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.5. GENERAL SUPPORT and Section C.2.6 1 Customer Service: “(a) The contractor is required to staff the Customer Services Window at USPTO's Alexandria campus from 8:30 a.m. until midnight each workday unless otherwise directed by the Government.”

a. Does the Government intend to issue task orders under this contract at different levels than will have been priced in Schedule B?

Ans: See answer to Question #92.

106. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.7 FEE COLLECTION: “After correcting any errors and completing the reconciliation, the contractor will deliver all documents and financial instruments to the designated location(s).”

a. Please describe the frequency and types of errors that have required reconciliation and the average time it takes to reconcile the errors?

Ans: This data is not available. However, errors could be in the form of transposed numbers on applications, credit card number, deposit accounts, but is not limited to this. The quality level is 100% for posting fees as referenced under Section C.2.7(a) New Application #3. The error rate is very minimal under this section.

107. Reference Solicitation Section C.2.8 FORMALITY REVIEW: “(b) The contractor will receive a report or notification of applications that may be ready for formalities review.”

a. What is the current average time that it takes for a reviewer to complete a formality review by application type? What are the common issues that impact completion of formality reviews by application type?

Ans: See answer to Question #15c. Downtime of the Pre-Exam system may be an impact that will prevent the contractor from completing the application review.

108. Reference Solicitation Section L.15.3.2 Quality Control: “The offeror shall provide information on quality control and quality assurance techniques planned to meet its requirements of Section C. In addition, the offeror’s approach should demonstrate the ability to achieve required timeliness and quality standards and identify methods planned to insure provision of quality products and services including such things as:

- Problem identification and resolution**
- Spot-checks of ongoing work,**
- Type, method and frequency of inspections and**

- Identification and elimination of systemic problems.

The offeror's proposed Quality Control Plan will be incorporated into the resulting contract."

a. Is a Quality Control Plan required with the proposal submission? If so, is the Plan included in the 20-page count? If not, we assume the QCP will be due at contract start.

Ans: Yes, the Quality Control Plan (QCP) is required with the proposal submission. The QCP is included in the page count for Factor 1, Technical Approach; however, the page count is hereby increased from 20 pages to 25 pages. The change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

109. Is the incumbent eligible to bid on the new requirement?

Ans: Please see answer to Question #88.

110. Under CLIN 1, File Maintenance, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: The number of contract employees currently being utilized is proprietary to the incumbent contractor. The requirement has been revised from the current contract and is subject to further change based on fluctuations in usage by the USPTO. Throughout the life of the contract, USPTO will be open to any cost savings, improvements, and efficiencies.

111. Under CLIN 1, File Maintenance, Artifacts Retrieved and Refiled, the Government estimates 81,000 files will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many files does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: This information is considered proprietary to the incumbent contractor. Also, Section B provided estimated quantities and turnaround times.

112 Under CLIN 1, File Maintenance, what is the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

113. Under CLIN 2, Copying, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

114. Under CLIN 2, Copying, References, the Government estimates 7,000 images will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many images does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111. Please see revised Section B, the unit has changed from images to pages. This change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**.

115. Under CLIN 2, Copying, Other, the Government estimates 10,000 images will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many images does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

116. Under CLIN 2, Copying, Office Action Images, the Government estimates 40,000 images will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many images does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

117. Under CLIN 2, Copying, PCT, the Government estimates 400,000 images will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many images does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

118. Under CLIN 2, Copying, what is the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

119. Under CLIN 3, Document Receipt and Mailing, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

120. Under CLIN 3, Document Receipt and Mailing, Outgoing Mail, the Government estimates 1,746,000 documents will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

121. Under CLIN 3, Document Receipt and Mailing, what is the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

122. Under CLIN 4, Print Working File, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

123. Under CLIN 4, Print Working File, Government estimates 167,000 files will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

124. Under CLIN 4, Print Working File, what is the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

125. Under CLIN 5, General Clerical Support, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

126. Under CLIN 5, General Clerical Support, what are the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

127. Under CLIN 6, Incoming Mail Processing, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

128. Under CLIN 6, Incoming Mail Processing, US Received, the Government estimates 124,000 envelopes will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many envelopes does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

129. Under CLIN 6, Incoming Mail Processing, PCT Received, the Government estimates 92,000 envelopes will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many envelopes does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

130. Under CLIN 6, Incoming Mail Processing, Faxes Received, the Government estimates 52,000 faxes will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many faxes does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

131. Under CLIN 6, Incoming Mail Processing, what is the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

132. Under CLIN 6a, Customer Service Window, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

133. Under CLIN 6a, Customer Service Window, what are the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

134. Under CLIN 7a, Fee Collection New Applications, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

135. Under CLIN 7a, Fee Collections New Applications, US, the Government estimates 35,000 applications will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many applications does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

136. Under CLIN 7a, Fee Collections New Applications, PCT, the Government estimates 5,100 applications will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many applications does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

137. Under CLIN 7a, Fee Collections New Applications, what are the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

138. Under CLIN 7b, Fee Collections Other, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

139. Under CLIN 7b, Fee Collections Other, US, the Government estimates 78,000 documents will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

140. Under CLIN 7b, Fee Collections Other, PCT, the Government estimates 4,000 documents will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

141. Under CLIN 7b, Fee Collections Other, Refunds Processed, the Government estimates 4,000 refunds will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many refunds does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

142. Under CLIN 7b, Fee Collections Other, what are the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

143. Under CLIN 8, Formality Review, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

144. Under CLIN 8, Formality Review, what are the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

145. Under CLIN 8a, New Applications, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

146. Under CLIN 8a, New Applications, Utility, the Government estimates 370,000 applications will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many applications does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

147. Under CLIN 8a, New Applications, Design, the Government estimates 30,000 applications will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many applications does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

148. Under CLIN 8a, New Applications, Provisional, the Government estimates 120,000 applications will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many applications does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

149. Under CLIN 8a, New Applications, USPTO Form SB/69, the Government estimates 800 applications will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many applications does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

150. Under CLIN 8a, New Applications, what are the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

151. Under CLIN 8b, Follow-On Documents, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

152. Under CLIN 8b, Follow-On Documents, Missing Part Responses, the Government estimates 160,000 documents will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

153. Under CLIN 8b, Follow-On Documents, Change of Address Requests, the Government estimates 36,000 documents will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

154. Under CLIN 8b, Follow-On Documents, Corrected Filing Receipt Requests, the Government estimates 23,000 documents will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

155. Under CLIN 8b, Follow-On Documents, Revocation/POA Requests, the Government estimates 230,000 documents will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

156. Under CLIN 8b, Follow-On Documents, PDX Request, the Government estimates 129,000 documents will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

157. Under CLIN 8b, Follow-On Documents, USPTO Form SB/69, the Government estimates 800 documents will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

158. Under CLIN 8b, Follow-On Documents, what are the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

159. Under CLIN 9, PCT 371 BIB Data Entry and Mailing, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

160. Under CLIN 9, PCT 371 BIB Data Entry and Mailing, Files Key, the Government estimates 90,000 applications will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many applications does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

161. Under CLIN 9, PCT 371 BIB Data Entry and Mailing, what is the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

162. Under CLIN 10, PCT International BIB Data Entry, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

163. Under CLIN 10, PCT International BIB Data Entry, International, the Government estimates 53,000 applications will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many applications does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

164. Under CLIN 10, PCT International BIB Data Entry, what is the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

165. Under CLIN 11, PCT Printing and Mailing, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

166. Under CLIN 11, PCT Printing and Mailing, Outgoing Office Action, the Government estimates 61,000 documents will be processed in the Base Year. On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis how many documents does the average contract employee currently process?

Ans: See the answer to Question #111.

167. Under CLIN 11, PCT Printing and Mailing, what is the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

168. Under CLIN 12, Courier Support, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

169. Under CLIN 12, Courier Support, how many current contract vehicles are being utilized, or is the Government furnishing all vehicle support?

Ans: See the answers to Questions #31a, #47 and #110.

170. Under CLIN 12, Courier Support, what is the current SCA Occupational Code(s) being utilized for the current contract employees?

Ans: See the answer to Question #15d.

171. Under CLIN 13, Project Management Staff - Patents, how many current contract employees are being utilized?

Ans: See the answer to Question #110.

172. In order to allow more ample time for bidders to provide the best solution and pricing for USPTO, would USPTO consider an extension of the due date by at least two weeks?

Ans: See answer to Question #1. This change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

173. Our understanding of the RFP indicates that USPTO intends to increase automation and ultimately move to a less paper-intensive environment. This bidder offers, in addition to labor arbitrage support services, significant workflow consulting and technological capabilities that could improve USPTO efficiency and ultimately provide additional cost savings. Is the USPTO interested, in this procurement, to explore bidders' process improvement offerings?

Ans: The Government is open to suggestions for improving all areas of services.

174. Does the USPTO experience incoming volume fluctuations throughout the year? If so, please elaborate.

Ans: Yes, current fluctuations may be a result of the America Invents Act (AIA). Future, fluctuations may come as a result of the Hague Act and the Patent Law Treaty. However, advance notice will be provided before the implementation of any changes to the requirement.

175. Please identify any special employee background screenings or vetting required for this contract.

Ans: Level of clearance is in accordance with PTO-04 and PTO-11. All contractor employees must undergo a Personal Background Investigation and National Agency Check with Inquiries (NACI). Employees must complete the SF-85P or SF-86 using the e-QIP system.

176. Formality Review (C.2.8) indicates that 'the USPTO may add additional patent offices to this document sharing arrangement.' Does that arrangement translate to additional processing volumes? If so, can the USPTO provide more information related to the timing of adding these patent offices and identify any related volume increases?

Ans: There is no additional information available at this time as it relates to Section C.2.8(f). Also, please see answer to Question #57.

177. The Transition Plan (L.15.3.3) section of the RFP states that '.....the transition plan shall detail the acquisition of facilities....' Please confirm if any contractual service components/CLINs require offsite support.

Ans: None of the CLINS or contractual service components require off-site support. Mail-runs or other deliveries between USPTO facilities is not considered off-site support.

178. For each CLIN, what are the total number of work hours that are used to perform the associated tasks?

Ans: The length of time utilized for all tasks issued to the incumbent contractor is proprietary to the incumbent contractor. The POSS requirement has been revised from the current incumbent contract and may be subject to further change based on fluctuations in usage by the USPTO.

179. For CLIN 2, how long does it take to process and complete an average Image?

Ans: See the answer to Question 178.

180. For CLIN 4, how long does it take to process and complete an average File?

Ans: See the answer to Question 178.

181. For CLIN 6, how long does it take to process and complete an average Envelope?

Ans: See the answer to Question 178.

182. For CLIN 7a, how long does it take to process and complete an average Application?

Ans: See the answer to Question 178.

183. For CLIN 7b, how long does it take to process and complete an average Document?

Ans: See the answer to Question 178.

184. For CLIN 8, how long does it take to process and complete an average Application?

Ans: See the answer to Question 178.

185. For CLIN 8a, how long does it take to process and complete an average Application?

Ans: See the answer to Question 178.

186. For CLIN 8b, how long does it take to process and complete an average Document?

Ans: See the answer to Question 178.

187. For CLIN 9, how long does it take to process and complete an average Application?

Ans: See the answer to Question 178.

188. For CLIN 11, how long does it take to process and complete an average Document?

Ans: See the answer to Question 178.

189. For CLIN 12, how many vehicles are currently utilized to provide Courier Support?

Ans: See the answers to Questions #31a and 47.

190. RFP Section L.15.3.5 requires bidders to submit a letter of commitment for each key resource. Is it acceptable for bidders to provide representative resumes of key resources with the caveat that similarly credentialed resources would be assigned to the contract should the named resources be unavailable at time of contract execution or project initiation?

Ans: No.

191. How many computer workstations are included in GFE?

Ans: There are approximately 400 computer workstations; however, not all of them are being utilized. Also, see answer to Question #10.

192. Where are each of the computer workstations located?

Ans: Computer work stations are located at the Shirlington and Alexandria locations. Also, see answer to Question #78.

193. It is noted that the government will be providing computer systems, yet are copiers, scanning systems (equipment, hardware, and software) to be provided by the Contractor?

Ans: Attachment 7 provides a listing of GFE that will be provided by the Government which includes scanners. The offeror is responsible for any equipment and material associated with CLIN 5, Copying. Also, see answer to Question #6.

194. Is all indexing to be performed on indexing software provided by the government?

Ans: Indexing is not applicable to this requirement.

195. The RFP makes mention of an indexing/scanning vendor throughout various CLINs. Do the services to be provided within this contract include scanning and indexing service support or does USPTO already have a scanning vendor/solution in place? Please provide related details of any existing scanning vendor contract. If scanning/indexing is in scope for this engagement, could you please answer questions 23 through 57 (196-230)

Ans: There is minimal scanning performed under this requirement. Please see Section C.2.3 "Document Receipt and Mail". The majority of the indexing and scanning is the responsibility of a separate vendor. Documents to be indexed/scanned are placed in a designated location for them to pick up.

196. How many documents need to be scanned and indexed each day?

Ans: This information is not available. It is performed under a different contractual vehicle.

197. What is the total volume of documents that require scanning/indexing services?

Ans: See answers to Question #196.

198. What is the average number of pages per document?

Ans: See answers to Question #196.

199. What percentage of the total document volume is double-sided?

Ans: See answers to Question #196.

200. What percentage of the total document volume is required to be scanned in color?

Ans: See answers to Question #196.

201. The RFP indicates that USPTO has scanning equipment. What brands and models of scanners does USPTO have?

Ans: They are (tabletop) Fijitsu Fi-575OC Image scanners.

202. How many scanners does USPTO have? Are they all located at one site?

Ans: Currently, the USPTO has two (2) scanners at one site.

203. Will USPTO consider allowing a vendor to bring its own scanning equipment on site?

Ans: No.

204. If a vendor can bring its own equipment onsite, what is the size of the space allocated to scanning/indexing?

Ans: See answer to Question #203.

205. If a vendor cannot bring its own equipment onsite, can a vendor take boxes of documents offsite to scan and index at the vendor facility?

Ans: See answer to Question #203.

206. Can a vendor use its own technology (software) to scan and index documents?

Ans: See answers to Questions #195 and #203.

207. If a vendor is required to use USPTO authorized scanning/indexing technology what software does USPTO use?

Ans: See answers to Questions #195.

208. In which location(s) are the scanners located?

Ans: The work will be performed on the concourse level in the Remsen Building at the Alexandria location.

209. Are documents that require scanning/indexing stored in boxes or on shelves?

Ans: No. Please see Section C.2.3(q).

210. Approximately how many boxes of documents require scanning/indexing services?

Ans: See answers to Questions #194 and #195.

211. Is it expected that the vendor will create a manifest and pack documents that require scanning into boxes?

Ans: See answers to Questions #194 and #195.

212. If the vendor is expected to pack boxes, does the vendor need to also supply the boxes and labeling materials?

Ans: No.

213. Is it expected that the vendor will provide the transportation needed to pick up boxes of documents that require scanning/indexing services?

Ans: No. See answer to Question #195.

214. If the vendor is expected to provide transportation, please provide the addresses to all the locations where documents that require scanning and indexing services reside.

Ans: See answers to Question #213.

215. Will all the documents that require scanning/indexing services be ready for pickup at one time? If not, what is the average number of boxes that will be available each week?

Ans: Currently, there is one pick-up in the morning each day from various locations, but this is subject to change. Also, please see answer to Questions #195 and #196.

216. Are documents contained within one folder belong together as a set? If so, what index fields do they share? (e.g., name, serial number, date, etc.)

Ans: Yes, they share the application number on each page.

217. Please name the fields that need to be indexed at the document level and provide examples.

Ans: See answers to Question #196.

218. Please name the fields that need to be indexed at the file level and provide examples.

Ans: See answers to Question #196.

219. Please list the different types of documents that require scanning and indexing.

Ans: See answers to Questions #196.

220. The RFP lists PDF as scanned document output. Are there any other file formats required?

Ans: No.

221. Is 200 dpi the desired resolution for scanning documents?

Ans: The quality is based on imagery feed.

222. Of the total document volume, please state what percentage is:

- a. 8.5" x 11"
- b. 11" x 14"
- c. 11" x 17"
- d. Larger than 11 x 17"
- e. Smaller than 8.5" x 11"
- f. Other? Please state.

Ans: In regards to scanning, 8.5" x 11" and A4 size papers are the primary sizes. Please see Section C.2.3.

223. What is the turnaround time from receiving a box of documents for scanning/indexing to creating the images and data files?

Ans: See answer to Question #196

224. Is off-site document scanning/indexing acceptable?

Ans: No. See answers to Question #196.

225. If off-site document scanning/indexing is acceptable, can we use sFTP to transmit the data and image files back to USPTO?

Ans: See answer to Questions #224

226. Does USPTO require scanned documents to be text-searchable (OCR'd)?

Ans: See answer to Questions #196.

227. Does USPTO have a database or look-up table that includes the minimal metadata fields that the vendor can use for reference?

Ans: See answers to Question #196

228. What type of database is the IFW? (e.g., Oracle, SQL, SharePoint)

Ans: The database for IFW is Oracle.

229. What type of database is SCORE?

Ans: The database for SCORE is Documentum platform.

230. Is there a specific file naming convention or format convention that needs to be used in order to be compatible with USPTO databases and systems? If so, please provide examples of the required conventions.

Ans: See answer to Question #196.

231. Does the client anticipate that all work will be done onsite or will there be some work done at the contractor's site?

Ans: All work shall be performed at USPTO buildings in Alexandria, Shirlington, and USPTO facilities which may be established. See Section F.4 – Place of Performance. The Franconia warehouse has been eliminated. This change is incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

232. Does the client have minimum qualifications that they want in the Project Manager and the Operations Manager to have, i.e. certain education, years of experience, certifications?

Ans: Yes, minimum qualifications have been incorporated into Section C.2.13 by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

233. How many contractor employees does the client anticipate are needed for this project?

Ans: It is the responsibility of the offeror to determine the number of contractor employees needed for this project.

234. How many contractor employees are currently performing work for this project?

Ans: Please see answer to Question #110.

235. Who is the incumbent on the contract?

Ans: Both the Request for Information (RFI) and the Pre-solicitation notice identified AKIMA/DTSV, 11405 North Community House Road, Suite 400, Charlotte NC 28277 as the incumbent.

236. Is the incumbent able to recompile for this contract?

Ans: Please see the answer to Question # 88

237. Will the client consider subcontractor past performance?

Ans: Yes. Please see the answers to Questions #37 and #38

238. Are there funds currently available for this project?

Ans: Yes.

239. We have more than 22 years administrative services support experience as a prime and subcontractor. However, at least 2 of our current contracts that are directly relevant to this effort are around \$600,000 annually. Will these contracts not be acceptable as past performance for this effort?

Ans: Please see the answer to Question #38.

240. What is the current FTE supporting this effort?

Ans: Please see the answer to Question #110.

241. How much time is being allocated for the transition of this effort?

Ans: Please see the answer to Question #62a.

242. Are tasks to be Time and Materials (T&M) or Firm, Fixed Price (FFP)?

Ans: The Government contemplates award of a combination Fixed-Price labor hour and Indefinite Quantity contract. This change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

243. Reference Sections L.8 Joint Venture Proposals and L.15.4 Past Performance: Clarifications to questions submitted about these RFP sections affect teaming decisions as well as which contracts each offeror selects as references. We respectfully request that the Government expedite answering these questions so that offerors can finalize their teaming

arrangements and past performance references in order to submit fully compliant proposals by the March 4 due date.

Ans: It is always the Government's intent to expedite answering questions so that offerors can finalize their proposals.

244. Reference Section L.15.4.a.2, "Two of the five (5) contract references, must be for work that the offeror performed and completed as a prime contractor." As you are aware, members of Joint Venture (JV) companies are jointly and severally liable for performance and execution of contracts. Please confirm that offerors who are participating in an existing JV currently performing a relevant contract as prime contractor, or have relevant past performance as a JV partner performing as prime contractor for PTO or other Government customers, will be able to claim this past performance to meet the above requirement.

Ans: Yes.

245. Reference Section L.8 JOINT VENTURE PROPOSALS, "No joint venture proposals will be accepted." Joint ventures are efficient business entities that have successfully primed and performed PTO contracts. In addition, JVs are accepted as offerors throughout the Federal Government, including both DoD and Civilian contracting organizations. JV's provide a seamless partnering of highly qualified contractors that present a unified, cost-efficient contractor team, while also supporting the accomplishment of Government small business goals. By not allowing JV's, small business competition will be restricted. What aspect of a JV offeror performing the contract will not satisfy the government's needs? Will the Government consider removing this language and the restriction against JVs bidding on the POSS contract?

Ans: No. Please see answer to Question #8.

246. Reference Section L.15.2. The RFP says to use at least 10 point font, but also says not to exceed 12 characters per inch. Ariel font in 10, 11, or 12 point does not meet the 12 characters per inch standard. (Ariel point size 12 has between 10 and 13 letters per inch depending on the particular letters used.) For other standard fonts, like Times New Roman, the size of the font would have to be even larger to meet the 12 characters per inch standard. We do not believe that it was the Government's intention to require that bidders use a larger than standard font. Would the Government please adjust the standard so that a 10 or 11 point font is permissible?

Ans: The required font is Times New Roman 12 point. This change is incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

247. Reference Section L.15.4.a.2, "Two of the five (5) contract references, must be for work that the offeror performed and completed as a prime contractor." Please confirm that this statement does not exclude using references from current, on-going contracts that are not yet completed.

Ans: No, it does not preclude using references from current, on-going contracts that are not yet completed. This change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

248. Reference Section L.15.2. 20 pages are inadequate to address all technical proposal requirements unless work flow diagrams are excluded from the page count. Would the government consider excluding work flow diagrams from the page count?

Ans: Yes, the work flow diagrams are excluded from the page count under technical approach, but the workflow diagram is limited to two (2) pages per CLIN. This change is incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

249. Reference Section L.15.2: How large may chart and graph (e.g., workflow diagrams) foldout pages be and how many pages do they count as? We would recommend that the foldouts be 11 x 17 and be excluded from the page count. If the government will not exclude workflow foldouts from the page count, then we recommend that they be counted as one page.

Ans: The work flow diagrams may not be larger than 11 x 17. Also, see answer to Question #248. This change is incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

250. Reference Section L.15.4.a.1, “If the offeror was recently acquired or merged with another entity, the references submitted must directly pertain to the experience of the offeror and not to parent corporations, subsidiaries, or affiliates.” Please define “recently acquired.” Suggest 3 years, consistent with the past performance requirement.

Ans: It is the same as the requirement for the five (5) contract references which is within a three (3) year period from release date of the Request for Proposal that meet currency and relevancy as stated in the solicitation.

251. Reference Section L.15.5. Will the government use an Independent Government Estimate during the evaluation? If there is no government estimate, how will the government determine if an offeror’s price is unrealistically high or low?

Ans: As stated in the RFP, the USPTO intends to evaluate price for fairness, reasonableness, and completeness. An Independent Government Estimate that is based upon many considerations, such as historical pricing and market conditions, is one of a variety of tools that the Government may use in its price evaluation.

252. Reference Schedule B. The various offices being supported in CLIN 5 may require labor categories other than those listed for most efficient support of the offices listed. Will we be able to propose additional labor categories as tasking is received?

Ans: Yes. The labor categories and hours are only estimates and are there for informational purposes only. The Offeror should propose the labor categories that are appropriate to the

requirement stated in Section C.2.5 to perform the work. Also, see answer to Question #15a. This change is incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

253. Reference Section L.15.4.a.1, “References provided shall pertain to the proposing corporate organization (prime contractor).” Please confirm that this language is not intended to prohibit Alaska Native Companies from referencing the past performance of sister or parent companies in accordance with FAR Subpart 15.305(a)(2)(iii).

Ans: FAR 15.305(a)(2)(iii) does not require an agency to consider the past performance of an entity’s sister or parent company. The RFP Section L.15.4.a.1 states that “references provided shall pertain to the proposing corporate organization (prime contractor).” If an ANC offeror provides references from a sister or parent company, it will not be considered relevant past performance pertaining to the offeror. If an offeror proposes to subcontract or team with a sister or parent company and submits references for its subcontractor or team member, two of the required five past performance references must still pertain to the entity (offeror) that is proposing as a prime contractor. See Section L.15.4.1.a.

254. Reference Section L.15.4.a.2, “If listing contract references from a proposed subcontractor, then a signed teaming agreement and plan must also be submitted with the Past Performance volume.... The teaming plan shall not exceed five (5) pages and is not included in the ten (10) page count for this factor.” Please confirm that the signed teaming agreement(s) are also excluded from the ten (10) page count for this factor.

Ans: The teaming plan is not included in the page count for the Past Performance factor. See page 80, a.2, 2nd paragraph, last sentence of the Solicitation.

255. What software currently generates the documents going out to recipients?

Ans: Currently, the USPTO uses OACS under Section C.2.3. Pre-Exam is used under Sections C.2.8. IFW is used under Sections C.2.9 and C.2.10.

256. What volume of documents generated by the office’s operations are variable data print? (ie. Where the document generation system merges data and content onto templates to produce a final document for recipients)

Ans: This information is not needed to respond to the RFP.

257. Are some documents required to be generated on-demand in real time for PTO workers?

Ans: No. There are some occasional accelerated mailings as referenced in Section C.2.3.

258. Are some documents required to be edited by PTO workers after they are generated?

Ans: No.

259. In reference to the Insurance requirements: Will there be any flight/air transportation required to fulfill the scope of work under this solicitation?

Ans: There is no required air transportation at this time. If the requirement changes and later require air transportation, H.4 Insurance Coverage would become applicable. See answer to Question #71.

260. What is the current Organizational Structure of the current operation? Please provide the number of supervisors, management or lead personnel in each location.

Ans: The current organization structure is provided by the incumbent contractor. This information may be considered proprietary to the incumbent's solution. Also, please see answer to Question #15c.

261. Will USPTO be providing software or should vendor include software in pricing?

Ans: Offerors will have access to all software and technical support related to this requirement.

262. What equipment and technologies are expected to be provided by the selected vendor?

Ans: The offeror is responsible for all equipment and material associated with CLINs 5 and 12. The offeror is also responsible for any office or consumable supplies needed to support all the CLINS under this requirement. Also, see answers to Questions #6 and #31a.

263. Will there be an opportunity to interview existing staff to gauge interest of being hired?

Ans: Yes, there will be an opportunity after contract award during the transition period. Existing staff should be given first right of refusal.

264. Is there any indication that you can provide, as to the number of respondents that submitted questions for this opportunity?

Ans: Questions were submitted by approximately 27 vendors.

265. Who maintains the fax machines?

Ans: The government will provide maintenance for all furnished GFE including the fax machines.

266. (a) What is the past history of courier support (Schedule B, Item 12)

Ans: Please see answer to Question #60.

267. Are the incumbents allowed to bid on this?

Ans: See answers to Questions #88.

268. What is the level of effort (number of personnel) for each task area or planned operations?

Ans: This requirement is considered proprietary to the incumbent's solution. Also, see answers to Questions #15c, #110, #113, #119, #122, #125, #127, #131, #134, #138, #143, #145, #151, #159, #162, #165, #168, #169, and #171.

269. Can you provide us the breakdown of personnel for each planned operation area for the current contract?

Ans: See answer to Question #268.

270. The RFQ states "For all references, contract value must be \$1million per year over the life of the contract" - what is the rational for this requirement?

Ans: Extensive research was performed prior to the release of the solicitation which clearly indicated the availability of many small businesses that are potentially capable of performing this requirement. USPTO utilized the results of the market research to further refine the requirements for past performance. Section L.15.4 requests that past performance references be for contracts whose value is equal to or greater than \$1,000,000 per year over the life of the contract. Taking into account the total small business set aside designation and the estimated contract value over the life of the Patent Office Support Services (POSS) contract (base period of one year plus four additional option years), a threshold of \$1 million or more per year for past performance references is considered reasonable.

271. Please provide the number of personnel (including their occupation code, and full vs. part-time status) currently used staff each CLIN.

Ans: Please see the answer to Question #268.

272. Several CLINs note that government equipment and software will be used in support of the services. Will the government be supplying support services on these items or will the contractor need to support these systems?

Ans: USPTO provides IT system support and maintenance. The offeror does not need to provide support for GFE. Also, please see answer to Question #262.

273. Please provide list of hardware provided by USPTO, such as copiers, printers, computers, etc.

Ans: Please see Attachment 7 of Section J. Also, see answers to Questions #49b, #50, #51, # 59, #193, #272 and #262.

274. If the government is not supplying some portion of the hardware (e.g. copiers, printers, computers) currently being utilized to service these functions, can the government specify the number and type of contractor supplied hardware units currently in use?

Ans: Equipment or hardware currently being proposed by the incumbent may be considered proprietary to the incumbent's solution. See answer to Question #273.

275. Referring to section H-4(e), please list/define the property that needs to be covered under Property Damage insurance?

Ans: It applies to any Government property directly or indirectly related to this requirement that may be damaged by the offeror.

276. The quantities noted in Schedule B for CLIN 5 are unclear—does each position need to be staffed for 2080 hours per year? Also with respect to CLIN 5, can the government please provide the responsibilities and hours/week for each noted position?

Ans: See answers to Questions #15a and #84.

277. Are the current contract employees operating under and collective bargaining agreement?

Ans: This information is not available to the Government.

278. Please provide actual volumes by CLIN for Fiscal Years 2009-2012.

Ans: Please see answer to Question #15c.

279. The pre-solicitation noted that the total amount obligated to date for this contract is \$237,000,000.00. Is that for the first 5 years, or does it include the 3 option years?

Ans: As stated in the pre-solicitation notice, the current contract period spans eight years, with a base with 4 option years, and 3 award terms.

280. Can the government provide additional information with regard to the volume fluctuations by CLIN that occur bi-weekly, quarterly and annually?

Ans: The volume fluctuations vary from CLIN to CLIN based on a number of variables such as public's response, filings, examiners' requests, etc. However, Section B provided estimated quantities and Section C provided turnaround times were provided for each CLIN. Also, please see answer to Question #174.

281. Please define the size and type of courier vehicle required for the project.

Ans: Please see the answer to Question 31a.

282. Can the government provide an example task order?

Ans: No.

283. Can the government please outline the location at which each CLIN will be performed, e.g. Carlyle, Shirlington.

Ans: Please see answer to Question #78.

284. Recognizing that requirements will change, please provide an example of the reports currently required under F.5.

Ans: There are various reporting requirements described in Section C. However, no particular format is required, other than providing the required information and the items listed at Section F.5. Changes to the frequency of reports per CLIN have been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

285. For Schedule B, CLINs 1, 3, 6a, and 10 to the right of “Staff Hour,” is the government expecting 1) a number of staff hours, or 2) a per hour rate?

Ans: The following per unit pricing is applicable: CLINs 0001 & 0003 is per document, CLIN 0006a is staff hour (per hour rate), CLIN 0010 is per application. Section B is revised to reflect these changes which are incorporated into **Amendment 0003**. Please see revised RFP.

286. For Schedule B, CLIN 6, the government notes “Envelope” for Unit Price where above there are both “Envelope” and “Fax” types. Does the government want a single mixed rate for both mail types?

Ans: CLIN 6 is to be priced on a per envelope rate.

287. The volume requirements noted in Schedule B for CLIN 12 are unclear. Can the government supply any additional information? For example, can the government provide any information with regard to anticipated peak volume requirements?

Ans: See answers to Questions #18a and #60.

288. What kind of copier will the contractor staff use?

Ans: See answers to Questions #6, #25a and #26.

289. Will the incumbent enjoy any preferential treatment based on its 8(a) and Alaska Native Company status?

Ans: No.

290. Can you provide the current labor mix?

Ans: This information is provided by the incumbent contractor. It may be considered proprietary to the incumbent's solution. Also, see answers to Questions #15c and #15d.

291. Will there be a significant reduction to the current contract?

Ans: The requirement has been revised from the current contract and is subject to further change based on fluctuations in usage by the USPTO.

292. Can you provide the contractor staff anniversary information?

Ans: This information is not available to USPTO.

293. Will vehicles be required for courier services?

Ans: Yes, please see the answer to Question #31.

294. Is a proposal title page excluded from the technical proposal page limit?

Ans: Yes.

295. RFP Page 79, L.15.3.5 Key Personnel states: "Each resume should be accompanied by a letter of commitment letter shall not exceed 3 pages."

a. Is the letter of commitment limited to 3 pages or is the resume limited to 3 pages?

Ans: For each key personnel, the resume inclusive of the commitment letter is limited to 3 pages. Also, see answer to Question #75.

296. RFP Page 4, Schedule B. CLIN 8, Formality Review

a. The description in the row directly following CLIN 8 is "Total New Processed", however the quantity for each contract period is blank. Please clarify.

Ans: See revisions to Section B incorporated by **Amendment 0003**.

297. RFP Page 2, Schedule B. CLIN 1, File Maintenance

a. The row for Reference Re filing has a quantity of Zero (0) for each of the contract periods, is this correct? Please clarify.

Ans: Please see answer to Question #13.

298. RFP Page 3, CLIN 6, Incoming Mail Processing

a. The row for Reference Re filing has a quantity of Zero (0) for each of the contract periods, is this correct? Please clarify.

Ans: There is no refilling under CLIN 6. Refiling is associated with CLIN 0001. Please see answer to Question #13a.

299. RFP Page 3, CLIN 6, Incoming Mail Processing

a. Two of the line items with quantities in this CLIN have a Unit of “Envelope” and the Faxes Received line requests only pricing of the line items with a Unit of “Envelope.” Please clarify how you wish the bidders to price the Faxes Received.

Ans: See answer to Question #286.

300. RFP Page 22, C.2.6.1 Customer Service Window requires 15.5 hours of availability each day. Section B requests pricing of 2080 hours. How are contractor’s to provide these hours of coverage with only 2080 hours priced? Are overtime and/or second shift rates requested?

Ans: See answer to Questions #16. It is the offeror’s responsibility to determine how to manage the hours to cover the window within Department of Labor guidelines.

301. RFP Page 6, Schedule B, lists Project Management Staff as CLIN 13. RFP Page 32, Section C.2.13, Project Management, CLIN 13, describes certain minimum qualifications for project management personnel and states, “The project management staff shall ensure the smooth functioning of the services required under the contract. The project management staff will work closely with the government operations managers to address operational issues and challenges and to implement new processes and procedures.” RFP Page 78, Section L.15.3.1, requests a technical approach to CLINs 1-12, omitting CLIN 13, Project Management.

a. Overall project management will be a key determinant in the successful satisfaction of CLINs 1-12. Would the government consider modifying Section L.15.3.1 to require a technical approach for Project Management as a CLIN? If not, where would the government prefer offerors to address this capability? Further, would the government consider allowing an extra page for this technical approach?

Ans: Section 1.15.3.1 “Planned Operation” is modified to include C.2.13 (CLIN 13) Project Management Staff. See also answer to Question #108. The change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**.

302. CLIN 2 indicates expected quantities for copies. C.2.2 explains how copy processing requirements exceed the typical office environment, e.g., PALM location. These nontraditional steps apply to each copy request rather than to each page, therefore labor estimates scale in part with the number of requests rather than the number of pages.

a. To facilitate accurate contractor estimates, please indicate the typical number of pages per copy request.

Ans: Copying fluctuates on a daily basis. There are single and double-side copying needed at times. Estimates are provided in Section B for this requirement. Offerors are asked to submit a firm fixed price proposal that encompasses all associated costs and performance risks. Also, see question to Question 114.

303. CLIN 2 indicates expected quantities for copies by type. PCT accounts for 88% of expected copies during the base year, but C.2.2 indicates the space provided for copying is in the Remsen Building.

a. Please confirm that no PCT copying is expected under this Task outside of the single Remsen Building facility. For copying performed under this task, please confirm that all Shirlington copy requests will be performed at the single Remsen Building facility.

Ans: PCT copying under CLIN 0002 is currently performed in the Remsen Building. There is no copying performed at the Shirlington location.

304. Page 7, Section C.2(a), Requirements include receiving and processing United States (U.S.) and international applications and application-related papers; maintaining miscellaneous paper files, collecting fees and updating electronic financial records; monitoring electronic mailboxes and managing, forwarding, and closing messages; mailing examiner office actions and other documents; conducting legal and content reviews of newly submitted applications and follow-on documents for USPTO compliance and completeness, creating electronic bibliographic data records, and preparing and mailing notices to applicants; copying technical references, application documents and other materials; printing and delivering working files for examiner use, sorting and delivering incoming mail and other materials; and locating and delivering residual paper application files in response to requests or in order to match incoming papers.

a. With respect to “locating and delivering residual paper application files in response to requests”, are the locations limited to USPTO facilities in Alexandria and Shirlington?

Ans: Yes.

305. C.2.1 includes 11 subsections (a) through (k). Only subsection (h) and the final sentence of subsection (k) explicitly apply to the PCT file room. The context suggests that all four subsections (h) through (k) apply to the PCT file room, and only to the PCT file room.

a. Which interpretation is correct?

Ans: Section H and the last sentence in Section K, applies to the PCT file room only.

306. Page 7, Section C.2.1(a), “The examiner search file (ESF) is housed in the concourse level of some or all of the USPTO buildings and at the Franconia warehouse.”

a. Exactly how many buildings comprise the ESF facilities today?

Ans: Currently, only one building houses the EFS.

b. Which buildings specifically contain portions of the ESF today?

Ans: The EFS is located on the concourse level of the Randolph Building.

c. What is the address of the Franconia Warehouse?

Ans: The Franconia Warehouse has been eliminated from this Solicitation. See answer to Question #231. This change is incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

d. Is every ESF facility staffed today?

Ans: Yes. See answers to Question #306a and #306b.

e. Does USPTO require that the contractor staff every ESF facility during normal work hours?

Ans: Yes. See answer to Question #306a.

f. Given plans to “abolish the ... PCT file room” [RFP page 10], which specific ESF file room will hold PCT patent applications and related files?

Ans: PCT file room has been consolidated and is located in the Randolph Building.

307. C.2.1(j) first sentence, and adjacent subsections, identify only “files” entering and leaving the file room. Second sentence mentions “documents to be associated with files”, then a requirement to “match” those documents with files, and finally a disposition of either re-filing or mailroom pickup.

a. What are these documents?

Ans: These are PCT documents to be matched with the paper files.

b. Where do these documents come from?

Ans: Correspondence comes from search authorities and application papers that need to be matched with the application files.

c. How are the documents associated and matched with files?

Ans: They are matched based on the PCT application number.

d. Once matched, how is the determination made between re-filing and placing for pickup?

Ans: This is based on whether there is a request from the government representative for the file. If no request, it goes back to the file room for filing.

308. C.2.1 describes processing requirements for ESF foreign patent documents, for ESF NPL, for PCT application files & related documents, and for Artifact Files. Section B, CLIN 1, identifies non-zero quantities for Artifacts File processing only.

a. Is processing expected for Artifact Files only? If not, what are the expected quantities for all other types of processing described under Section C.2.1?

Ans: Currently, there is very little amount of Reference Refiling. However, if the need arises, then it would be performed under CLIN 0001 at the same price for File Maintenance. Also, see answer to #13a.

309. Page 8 and 10, Section C.2.1(a), [second occurrence, page 10] “Artifact files for plant applications are forwarded to the Technology Center (TC) as soon as they are prepared. All other artifact files are forwarded to the TC as soon as the Office of Patent Application Processing (OPAP) processing is completed...”. C.2.1(a) [first occurrence, page 8] indicates that ESF file rooms are housed at the concourse level, i.e., one facility per building, while there can be multiple TCs per building.

a. In performance of this File Maintenance task, is the contractor required to forward plant application artifact files to the TC? If not, who performs this forwarding? How and when are plant application artifacts files sent from the TC to the ESF?

Ans: Yes. The POSS contractor forward plant artifact files to the TC when received from the scanning contractor daily. The plant application artifacts files are not housed in the ESF, they are kept within the TC.

b. In performance of this File Maintenance task, is the contractor required to forward all other artifact files to the TC after OPAP processing? If not, who performs this forwarding? How and when are these other artifact files sent from the TC to the ESF?

Ans: Yes, the POSS contractor is required to forward all other artifacts files to the TC after OPAP processing. However, with the exception of abandoned artifact files, these files are placed in a designated location to be delivered to the Franconia Warehouse by a separate vendor. These files are forwarded from the scanning contractor to the POSS contractor which in turns delivers the files to the TC.

c. In performance of this File Maintenance task, does the contractor perform the OPAP processing? If not, is the contractor required to route the artifact files to OPAP, or is OPAP a source for new artifact files input to this File Maintenance task?

Ans: Yes, the POSS contractor performs the OPAP processing.

310. C.2.1(a) second occurrence, page 10] requires the contractor to “identify and forward all new artifact files from the indexing and scanning contractor...”, indicating that the indexing and scanning contractor is one source for transactions input to this File Maintenance task.

a. Please identify all sources of new artifact files input to this task.

Ans: New artifact files will come from the indexing and scanning contractor. Requests and refile may come from any business Patent area.

311. C.2.2 contains four sections, each starting over with a paragraph (a):

- 1. Technology Center Copying**
- 2. IFW applications except PCT**
- 3. Paper Applications**
- 4. PCT IFW Applications**

Only the first section (Technology Center Copying) identifies facility space for copying, and limits that space specifically “in support of this requirement”.

a. In performance of this Copying task, does USPTO expect copying for IFW, paper, and PCT to be performed in the single Remsen space? In performance of this Copying task, will copying be performed in any other facilities? Will the Remsen space include any furniture? Will the Remsen space include normal phone, PC, and supplies for the contractor staff? Please provide a layout diagram indicating at least dimensions and power receptacles for the Remsen space provided for this Copying task.

Ans: All copying for CLIN 2 will be done in the Remsen building. Also, see answer to Question #303. In the space for copying, there are computer workstations, OACS network printers, central fax printers, office phones, etc. The USPTO provides all envelopes, folders, and label for folders under this CLIN. The offeror is responsible for the necessary equipment and materials needed for copying under this CLIN. Any other consumable or office supplies are the offeror’s responsibility to determine what is needed to successfully perform this requirement. Also, please see answers to Questions #6, #25, #26 and #100.

312. Page 12, Section C.2.2, Will the USPTO require any color copying for artifacts, technical references, or application papers as part of the contract?

Ans: No.

313. Section C.2.2.IFW. (a) requires the contractor to pickup red Office Action folders and then make the determination about whether paper copies are required.

a. In performance of this Copying task, would red Office Action folders be sent to the Tech Center Copying facility if they do not require paper copies? Does USPTO send all red Office Action folders to the Tech Center Copying facility for processing before the CLIN 3 Document Receipt and Mail task? Or does the CLIN 3 task review Office Actions and make the determination about which ones require paper copies?

Ans: We do not understand your question. CLINS 2 and 3 are separate tasks.

314. Page 12, Section C.2.2 (a), The contractor is required to provide the equipment and material to make these copies. The Government will provide space in the Remsen building at USPTO's Alexandria campus for contractor personnel and equipment in support of this requirement.

a. Please indicate the approximate dimensions of the Remsen building space and the existing power available for copier use.

Ans: See answer to Question #26.

315. Section C.2.2.IFW.(b) requires the contractor to copy other materials, typically high-volume copying.

a. Is this requirement unique to, or in any way associated with, the “IFW Applications except PCT” section under which it is presented?

Ans: All application types including PCT can be associated with copying under Section C.2.2. The primary focus under Section C.2.2 is copying.

316. C.2.2.IFW.(b) refers to a “Required turnaround time” on the copy request form.

a. What event starts the clock for required turnaround time (e.g, folder pickup, receipt at Remsen mailroom, receipt at copy center, etc.)? What event ends the clock for required turnaround time (e.g., placed in Copy Center bin for pickup, delivery to requestor’s building mailroom, delivery to requestor’s TC, delivery to requestor’s desk, etc.)?

Ans: The clock starts when the folder is picked up from the Service Center and the clock stops when the folder is dropped off at the designated location for scanning pick up.

317. C.2.3.(e) presents a required to scan documents using GFE.

a. Will the necessary GFE be made available in the single Remsen mail room? Will the necessary GFE be made available in any other locations?

Ans: Yes. See answers to Questions #10 and #311.

318. C.2.3.(t) is the only mention of “Accelerated mail notices”.

a. Where and when are these notices originated? How are these notices communicated and delivered to the contractor? What forms are involved (e.g., PTO-90, PTO-85, or other form)? What processing is required? What event starts the 1-hour performance clock? What event ends the 1-hour performance clock?

Ans: These notices are minimal. The examiner's offices originate the notices. The notices are identified by a specific color folder dropped off by a Government representative to a designated location or received through the OACS printer. Any USPTO form could be used for the Accelerated mail such as PTO-85, PTO-90 or any other form. The required processing is identified in Section C.2.3. The performance clock starts when the folder is picked up from the designated pickup location and ends when the notice is dropped off in a designated location for mailing and a copy is dropped in a designated location for scanning. The performance clock starts from the OACS printer when the notice is retrieved and ends when the notice is dropped off in a designated location for pickup. Again, please refer to Section C.2.3.

319. Sections C.2.3.(t), C.2.3.(f): C.2.3.(t) requires other performance measurements starting upon "retrieval by the contractor" and "retrieval of the work". Retrieval of colored action folders is clear, but C.2.3.(f) previously indicated that most outgoing actions print throughout the day in the contractor's area.

a. Is the print time recorded in order to measure performance goals? Does "retrieval" refer to the printing time or to the moment the contractor retrieves the printed material?

Ans: No, print time is not recorded to measure performance goals. Retrieval refers to the moment the contractor retrieves the printed material.

320. Page 19, C.2.5(a), As required by the Government, the contractor shall provide ongoing services in support of patent application examining and processing.

a. Will any of the USPTO defined tasks involve the use of eDAN or other examiner-based GUI as part of the contract?

Ans: No.

321. Page 19, Section C.2.5(a), Representative tasks include answering phones, processing examining case transfers, researching PALM to locate application information, and docketing cases to examiners.

a. Which automated system does USPTO use for Docket management support as part of the contract?

Ans: Some areas do not use Docket management. Areas such as Petitions, Office Data Management, File Information Unit, PCT Legal, use PALM.

322. Page 20, Section C.2.5(a), Requirements related to the Office of Data Management include: Ordering and sending files from and to the files repository

a. Does the "files repository" refer to USPTO warehouse space in Alexandria or its facilities in Boyers, PA?

Ans: The file repository is located in Springfield, VA.

323. Sections C.2.6.1(b) and (c): C.2.6.(b) requires support of USPTO’s Central Fax, without indicating a location. C.2.6.(c) requires support at the OPAP open/sort area, without indicating a location. C.2.6.1 requires support at the Customer Service Window, indicating the location as “USPTO’s Alexandria Campus”.

a. In which USPTO facility is the Central Fax located?

Ans: It is currently located in the Remsen Building, but it may be subject to change.

b. In which USPTO facility is the OPAP open/sort area located?

Ans: It is currently located in the Randolph Square Building in Shirlington, VA.

c. Are all three work areas under Task 6 collocated?

Ans: No. See answer to Question #78.

d. Are all three work areas under Task 6 adjacent?

Ans: No. See answer to Question #78.

324. Page 27, Section C.2.8, With respect to “conducting legal and content reviews of newly submitted applications and follow-on documents for USPTO compliance and completeness”, how many terminals are in use by the incumbent contractor to accomplish formalities review at present?

Ans: The number of terminals being utilized by the incumbent contract is proprietary to the incumbent’s contractor solution. The requirement has been revised from the current contract and may be subject to further change based on fluctuations in usage by USPTO. Also, see answer to Question #191.

325. Page 27, Section C.2.8, With respect to “conducting legal and content reviews of newly submitted applications and follow-on documents for USPTO compliance and completeness”, will all of this effort be accomplished at USPTO facilities in Shirlington? If not, what location will be used?

Ans: Yes. Please see answer to Question #78.

326. Page 27, Section C.2.8, With respect to “conducting legal and content reviews of newly submitted applications and follow-on documents for USPTO compliance and completeness”, can we assume that all terminals, software, and communications access required to do formalities review will be GFE?

Ans: Yes.

327. Page 27, Sections C.2.8, C.2.9: With respect to “bibliographic data records” creation and maintenance, are the US application and PCT application task co-located?

Ans: Yes. Please see answer to Question #78.

328. Page 32, Section C.2.12: To support file retrieval and delivery and movement of other documents and fees, the contractor must provide courier service between the USPTO buildings in Shirlington and Alexandria, this may include adding delivery locations near the USPTO campus, but not in USPTO leased space.

a. Please confirm that “delivery locations near the USPTO campus, but not in USPTO leased space” are within walking distance from USPTO leased space.

Ans: Shirlington and Alexandria are two different locations. Delivery at the Alexandria location is within walking distance. Please see answers to Questions #23 and #78.

329. Page 59, Section I.14, There are several references to “High or moderate Risk” contracts in this section of the RFP

a. Is this contract designated a high or a moderate risk contract? If so, which one?

Ans: This is moderate risk.

330. Page 77, Section L.15.3: Transition Plan: evaluate an offeror’s plan and schedule to acquire needed facilities, equipment and supplies and to recruit and train personnel. The plan will be evaluated for its feasibility in meeting required contract start date.

a. Please clarify whether the 2 month period between the award and full operation will involve parallel [sic] operation with the current contractor.

Ans: The incumbent’s contract does include FAR 52.237-3 “Continuity of Service. It is expected that the incumbent contractor will abide by the clause to help the successor offeror maintain the continuity and consistency of the services required by the contract.

331. Page 77, Section L.15.3, Transition Plan: evaluate an offeror’s plan and schedule to acquire needed facilities, equipment and supplies and to recruit and train personnel. The plan will be evaluated for its feasibility in meeting required contract start date.

a. Please clarify how much training USPTO will provide with respect to use of its automated systems such as IFW, RAM, PALM EXPO, PALM.

Ans: The Government will provide limited amount of specialized training. The POSS contractor is responsible for training its staff on the automated systems.

332. Sections L.15.2: L.15.2 identifies a 20-page maximum for the Technical Approach. L.15.3 and its subordinate paragraphs identify four Technical Approach subsections included in the page count: Planned Operations (detailing 12 task workflows, processes, and management); Quality Control (including inspection details specific to each of the 12

tasks); Transition Plan (including all equipment, facilities, recruiting, training, risks, experience, schedule, and more); and Resources (detailing staffing, supplies, organization, subcontractors, responsibilities, reporting, resource management, recruiting, training, contingencies, and more for every CLIN and every labor category). Each of the four subsections would require 20 pages to present all of the requested information, with the Planned Operations requiring twice that for so many tasks.

a. Please confirm that USPTO requires the requested information to be summarized as 20 pages total for all four subsections

Ans: The total page count for the Technical Approach has been increased from 20 pages to 25 pages. Also, see answers to Questions #248 and #249. This change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**, See revised RFP.

333. Section L.15.3 requires workflows, diagrams, and workflow management for all 12 tasks. The incumbent contract's RFP did not require this information for tasks that did not involve recurring workflow procedures, e.g., General Support, Courier Support, etc.

a. Please confirm that USPTO requires workflows and supporting information for all 12 tasks listed.

Ans: USPTO requires work flows charts for all CLINS except CLIN 1 (File Maintenance); CLIN 4 (Print Working File), CLIN 5 (General Clerical Support), and CLIN 12 (Courier Support). This change has been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

334. Sections L.10, F.3, L.15.3.3: L.10 indicates an award date of May 1, 2013, while F.3 indicates a contract start date of July 1, 2013. There is no start date or duration indicated for Transition, but L.15.3.3 requires the contractor "to be fully functional on July 1, 2013".

a. Does USPTO expect the contractor to incur Transition costs prior to the contract start date, or will Transition begin on July 1? What is the expected duration for contractor Transition? On what date will USPTO begin enabling and supporting contractor Transition, e.g., kickoff meeting, facility survey, on-site discovery, names of incumbent individuals, allowing equipment installations, etc. so the contractor can be "fully functional on July 1, 2013" on by any other target date?

Ans: Section L.13 Post Award Conferences states that a post award conference will be scheduled within 15 days after the date of contract award. Also see answer to Question #62a about expected transition time.

335. Page 85, Evaluation Factor 1 – Planned Operations: Evaluation Factor 1 – Planned Operations: Please provide diagrams of the current workflow used by USPTO to process requests and respond

Ans: The current workflow utilized is provided by the incumbent contractor and is proprietary to its technical solution. The requirement has been revised from the current (incumbent) contract and may be subject to further change based on fluctuations in usage by USPTO.

336. Page 86, Evaluation Factor 1 – Resources: Evaluation Factor 1 – Resources: What resources are proprietary in nature and what resources are provided by USPTO? The inventory Attachment does not provide sufficient detail to determine the resource gap between what USPTO provides and what is needed to assess this element giving the incumbent a disproportionately better score in the evaluation criteria

Ans: In addition to Attachment 7, see answers to Question #6, #43a, #43b, #49b, #50, #51, #53, #59, #65, #193, #261 and #311. It is the responsibility of the offeror to determine what other equipment and material will be needed in regards to CLIN 5, CLIN 12 plus any consumable or office supplies that may be needed in support of each CLIN to successfully complete this requirement.

337. Page 86, Evaluation Factor 2 – Past Performance: Evaluation Factor 2 – Past Performance: What customer satisfaction measures are currently in use to assess USPTO performance of patent processing for this contract?

Ans: Currently, the USPTO does not have any performance measurements of the patent process for this effort. The RFP states required performance metrics throughout the solicitation. The past performance information will be based on the offeror's past performance in regards to this solicitation.

338. Page 86, Evaluation Factor 2 – Past Performance Evaluation reasonableness: Evaluation Factor 2 – Past Performance Evaluation reasonableness: Please provide the current incumbent turnover rate or provide the standard by which retention, and retaining a quality work force will be measured

Ans: This information is not available.

339. Page 86, Evaluation Factor 3 – Price Evaluation: Evaluation Factor 3 – Price Evaluation: Is this contract covered under the Service Contract Act? If so what are the DOL guidelines to be used for prevailing wages?

Ans: Yes. Please direct your questions concerning the Service Contract Act to the Department of Labor.

340. Page 8, Section C.2.1, On-site Search File Maintenance, Would the PTO please provide an estimated number of files that are maintained at each ESF location?

Ans: The estimated number of files being maintained at the Randolph Building is 25,000. However, the number will fluctuate when files are pulled and forwarded to the Franconia Warehouse.

341. Page 8, Section C.2.1, On-site Search File Maintenance, Would the PTO please provide the number of requests for files through the ESFs within the past 12 months?

Ans: This information is unavailable.

342. Page 2, Section B, CLIN 1, Reference Refiling, In CLIN 1, there is no volume (quantity) for on-site file maintenance (the columns are set at zero). The government only provides quantities for artifact filing. Please advise.

Ans: See answer to Question #13

343. Page 12, Section C.2.2 Technology Center Copying, subsection (a), The contractor is required to provide the equipment and material to make these copies, Would the PTO please provide the specification for a suitable copier?

Ans: It is the responsibility of the offeror to propose a suitable copier. Also, please see answers to Questions #6, #25 and #26.

344. Page 12, Section C.2.2. Technology Center Copying, subsection (a), The government may also make periodic requests for high volume copies. Would the PTO please provide an estimate of the volume for the periodic request? (Frequency and page count)

Ans: See answer to Question #302.

345. Page 14, Section C.2.3, subsection (a), Document Receipt and Mail, Would the PTO please provide the average volume of outgoing mail received on a daily basis over the past 12 months?

Ans: We do not have the average volume of outgoing mail received on a daily basis for the past 12 months. In addition, the requirement has been revised from the current contract and maybe subject to further change based on fluctuations in usage by USPTO. CLIN 3 states the estimated annual quantity of outgoing mail for this procurement.

346. Page 19, Section C.2.4, Print working file, In addition to the equipment required to create a working file, is the contractor required to provide any supplies to support this effort or will all supplies be provided by the PTO?

Ans: USPTO provides all printers, labels for folders, folders, paper and toner associated with this Section. It is the responsibility of the offeror to propose any supplies needed to successfully complete this requirement. See answer to Question #6.

347. Page 3, Section B, CLIN 5, General Support, In CLIN 5, would the PTO please confirm that the offeror is to provide only an hourly rate that is then multiplied by 2080 hours for each position listed?

Ans: CLIN 5, the hourly rate should comprise of health & welfare, G&A, benefits, and any other required benefit. This rate would be multiplied by the number of hours estimated. Also, the hours under CLIN 5 has been revised. Please see revised Section B incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

348. Page 32, Section C.2.12, Courier Support, Is the vendor required to provide the vehicle for the courier service or will it be provided by the PTO?

Ans: Yes, the offeror is to provide any vehicle or vehicles needed for courier support services. Also, see answer to Question #31a.

349. Page 37, Section F.4 – Place of Performance, Some or all of the project management shall be accomplished in these USPTO facilities. Some project management may be accomplished in contractor provided space. Are the project management activities performed in the contractor provided space at the sole discretion of the contractor, or are there certain tasks that must be performed in the USPTO facility?

Ans: The Project Management will perform all work at the USPTO facility. Also, see answer to Question #61.

350. Page 78, Section L.15.3.2 Quality Control, The offeror's proposed Quality Control Plan will be incorporated into the resulting contract. Is it the government's intent that the offeror deliver a Quality Control Plan as a part of the proposal? If so, is the QCP exempt from the volume page count?

Ans: Yes, the QCP is included in the page count under Technical Approach. The total pages have been increased from 20 to 25. See also, the answer to Question #108.

351. Our review of the RFP indicates that the only equipment and material the Contractor will provide is the photocopier. Is that assumption correct? If not, would the PTO please provide a detailed list of supplies, equipment, facilities, materials, and consumables needed for each task?

Ans: No. The offeror is also responsible for procuring contractor furnished equipment and material to make copies which may include toner, paper and maintenance in conjunction with CLIN 2, Copying. The offeror is also responsible for providing what is needed for CLIN 12, Courier Service. Also, see answers to Questions #6, #31a, #293, #311, #336 and #348.

352. For the incumbent SCA population, would the PTO please provide the project hire dates by labor category for each of the incumbent staff to allow us to prepare to offer incumbent staff the first right of refusal as is required by law for SCA personnel (29 CFR Part 9, Executive Order 13495, Nondisplacement of Qualified Workers Under Service Contracts)?

Ans: This information is not available to the USPTO. Also, see answers to Questions #89 and #292.

353. Would the PTO please provide a copy of the Standard Operating Procedures for each of the task areas to be performed?

Ans: Standard Operating Procedures can be obtained from Attachments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 5a, 5b, and 8. Additional guidance, if necessary, will be provided upon contract award to the successful offeror.

354. Will the government please provide a copy of workflow documents for each of the task areas to be performed?

Ans: No. See answers to Questions #335 and #353.

355. Page 32, Section C.2.12, Courier Support, Does the courier service require any special vehicles beyond a cargo van? If so, will the government describe the current type of vehicles being used to support this task?

Ans: See answer to Question #31a.

356. Section C 2.3, Page 15/Paragraph (e), Can the government provide an estimate of the quantity of files and pages that the examiner wants to include in an OACS eRed Folder office action with a request for the contractor to convert the document to PDF?

Ans: There is no standard number of pages for each office action. Each application submitted by an examiner varies in size and quantity of pages.

357. Section C 2.3 Page 15/Paragraph (e), Can the government provide an estimate of the speed (throughput) of the governments furnished equipment to produce PDF files?

Ans: See answer to Question #201. Based on the model of the scanner, the speed is approximately 40 ppm.

358. Section C 2.3 Page 15/Paragraph (f), Can the government provide clarification of the methodology used to calculate the 98% accuracy requirement for PDF files? Is the accuracy based upon images in the PDF being legible, matching the original image in clarity, and/or all images in the request being imaged and are included in the PDF file. Are there any other image or PDF issues to consider when calculating the 98% accuracy?

Ans: The 98% accuracy is based on the complete document contents of the original file and not the clarity of the image scanned to PDF file. The output should be as good as the original.

359. Section C 2.3 Page 15/Paragraph (f) Will the government provide representative copies of the daily, weekly, and/or monthly reports of scanning work?

Ans: See answer to Question #284. Changes to the frequency of reports per CLIN have been incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

360. Section C 2.3 Page 16/Paragraph (f) Can the government estimate the amount of additional effort percentage versus a typical non-peak period required during the peak volume periods? Also, what is the anticipated length of time for the peak period processing?

Ans: Estimated additional effort percentage is around 50 to 60%, but it is based on a number of variables such as examiners' production quota, number of files released by OPAP, etc. The anticipated length of time for the peak period is one (1) week, but it could be longer.

361. Section C 2.3 Page 16/Paragraph (g) Can the government estimate the total annual number of office actions and related pages/attachments that would need to be reviewed?

Ans: The estimated quantity for office actions is in Section B, CLIN 3. Pages are not counted. There is no page limit on an office action.

362. Section C 2.3 Page 16/Paragraph (h) What percentage of the outgoing volume is expected to be mail versus electronic?

Ans: The current estimated percentage of outgoing mail is 60% mailed versus 40% electronically.

363. Section C 2.3 Page 17/Paragraph (i) Can the government provide an estimate for the number of outgoing envelopes by size during peak and non-peak days?

Ans: Currently, there are three sizes of envelopes used which are provided by USPTO. Approximately 5,625 of the V-flap white window envelopes are issued daily. Approximately 670 of the Kraft envelopes are issued daily. Approximately 2,063 of the Piggyback envelopes with window are issued daily. The estimated number of outgoing envelopes by size during peak and non-peak days is not available.

364. Section C 2.3 Page 18/Paragraph (s) What level of effort is currently being experienced waiting on PALM issues to be resolved or may have been caused by PALM issues?

Ans: See answer to Question #48.

365. Section C 2.3 Page 18/Paragraph (s) Will the government provide an estimate of the surge required before and immediately after "count Monday?"

Ans: If you are referring to a system surge, see answer to Question #48. If you are referring to a quantity surge, quantities from week to week vary based on examiners' productivity.

366. Section C 2.3 Page 18/Paragraph (t) Can the government provide estimates for the number of Notices of Allowance and Accelerated mail notices?

Ans: No, but these notices are minimal. Also, see answer to Question # 318.

367. Section C 2.3 Page 18/Paragraph (t) Will the government provide representative copies of the daily, weekly, and/or monthly reports of document receipt and mailing work?

Ans: See answer to Question #284.

368. General Staffing: Who will make the determination of the Staffing required at each labor category and the staffing mix for each process?

Ans: It's the offeror's responsibility to propose staffing in accordance with Sections B and C.

369. General Staffing: Will USPTO inform us of changes to required staffing levels? At what frequency?

Ans: Advance notice will be provided before the implementation of any changes to the contract requirements.

370. General Staffing: Estimated hours of staffing per category not provided?

Ans: See revised Section B incorporated by **Amendment 0003**. See revised RFP.

371. General Staffing: Estimated hours of staffing for several categories where unit price and staff hours are not provided?

Ans: See answer to Question #370.

372. General Staffing: Estimated time for processing each type of activity/process unit needed to determine the staffing required?

Ans: As long as the required activity is completed within the required turnaround time and accuracy level, the estimated time to complete each activity and staffing required is up to the offeror.

373. General Staffing (Section B): Who will make the determination of the staffing required at each labor category and the staffing mix for CLIN, e.g. CLIN 5?

Ans: The offeror is to make the determination for staffing based on Section B and Section C.

374. General Staffing (Section B): Will USPTO inform us of changes to required staffing levels? At what frequency?

Ans: See answer to Question #369.

375. General Staffing (Section B): Can USPTO provide the estimated total annual hours of staffing per CLIN in either hours or FTE's?

Ans: See answer to Question #268.

376. General Staffing (Section B): Estimated hours of staffing for several categories where unit price and staff hours are not provided?

Ans: See answer to Question #370.

377. General Staffing (Section B): Estimated time for processing each type of activity/process unit needed to determine the staffing required, if the staffing requirements are to be determined by the vendor?

Ans: See answers to Questions #178 and #372.

378. General Staffing (Section B): I.8 52.222-42 (Page 52 of DOC52PAPT1200047 / Solicitation Document) – Is the table of employee classes comprehensive or illustrative only? Eg labor for CLIN 1,2,3,4,6,9,10,11 and 12 would not fall into these categories. Is the vendor free to make its own determination of employee class required for these CLINs?

Ans: Section I.8 of the RFP identifies the classes of services employees expected to be employed under the contract if they were employed by the contracting agency. However, the offeror is free to make its own determination as to what type of labor categories it chooses to employ in meeting the contract requirements.

379. General Transition Questions: Time available for Transition from incumbent?

Ans: Please see answer to Question #62a.

380. General Transition Questions: What are the SLAs for each of the assigned tasks? What is the current performance against these SLAs?

Ans: SLAs are identified throughout the Statement of Work.

381. General Transition Questions: Do we have detailed and validated SOP's for each of the processes mentioned in the SOW? Are these complete and updated?

Ans: See answer to Question #353.

382. General Transition Questions: Are there any specific requirements to any particular facility/room within the USPTO?

Ans: There are no specific requirements needed as it relates to the facility/room within the USPTO.

383. General Transition Questions: For each of the software application for the in scope work, what is the estimated training time for a new user to become functionally active on the application?

Ans: This will depend on the level of computer skill of each contractor employee. Training time ranges from several hours to a couple of days.

384. General Transition Questions: Incumbent's obligations to cooperate with the new awardee are not spelt out in the incumbent's contract. What are the incumbents' obligations with respect to working with the new awardee during transition?

Ans: See answer to Question #330.

385. General Transition Questions: What are the SLAs for each of the assigned tasks? What is the current performance against these SLAs?

Ans: See answer to Question #380. The incumbent's performance is proprietary.

386. General Transition Questions: Are the SOP's for each of the processes updated and current? To what extent do you estimate they reflect the process on the ground (PI mention percentage)?

Ans: We are unable to provide a PI mention percentage. We have made available all of the Standard of Procedures (SOPs) to the vendor as attachments in this Solicitation. Also, see answer to Question #353.

387. Resource Transition Questions: Will we have access to incumbent's personnel to perform the transition? For what period?

Ans: See answers to Questions #62a, #263 and #330.

388. Resource Transition Questions: Is the incumbent contractually committed to retain key personnel during the transition period? If yes, for what period before and after the incumbent's contract termination date?

Ans: See answer to Question #277.

389. Resource Transition Questions: Is there a restriction on the number of incumbent's staff that we can hire/take over? Are we precluded by USPTO from approaching incumbent to perform a full rebadge of their staff?

Ans: See answers to Questions #62a, #263, #330 and #334.

390. Resource Transition Questions: What is the current ratio of manager to process associates?

Ans: See answer to Question #277.

391. Resource Transition Questions: What is the level of expertise/knowledge required to merge and manage all artifact files for pending applications in the examination artifact file room?

Ans: It is the responsibility of the offeror to make this determination.

392. Process Related Questions: What are the significant process/technology changes being implemented and/or to be implemented in the next 12 months?

Ans: See answer to Question #174.

393. Process Related Questions: Are there still pending applications at USPTO that are not converted to IFW?

Ans: Yes, there are a small number of applications that are not in IFW.

394. Process Related Questions: What is the timeline to convert documents received by mail, fax or walk up window to IFW from paper?

Ans: The scanning contractor has 5 days to complete this requirement once the documents are placed in the designated location. Please refer to Section C.2.3.

395. Process Related Questions: Since foreign patent document and non-patent literature are currently in examiner search file (ESF) and there is a plan to eliminate ESF, will this foreign patent document and non-patent literature be converted electronically?

Ans: The files will be eliminated if they are made electronic or deemed to be non-useful.

396. Process Related Questions: When Foreign Patent documents transfer to electronic search process will they have a similar labeling procedure that is currently followed in ESF?

Ans: No.

397. Process Related Questions: In the filing box for ESF, are foreign patents and NPL literature dropped together?

Ans: Yes.

398. Process Related Questions: What is the process of repairing and replacing the damaged documents? Is there a team/unit that handles this or is this process documented and to be handled by the resource filing it?

Ans: The POSS contractor repairs documents by placing clear tape on the damaged portion of the document.

399. Process Related Questions: Is there a template we can review to provide weekly and/or monthly reports of filing work to the government?

Ans: There is not a template. No particular format is required, other than providing the required information.

400. Process Related Questions: Is PALM (Patent Application Locating and Monitoring) an application or a process?

Ans: PALM is an application software.

401. RFP Page 32 (Section C.2.12)

This paragraph requires the courier service “To support file retrieval and delivery and movement of other documents and fees”. Service is required “between the USPTO buildings in Shirlington and Alexandria”, with the possibility of “adding delivery locations”. With firm fixed pricing required for this CLIN, please provide the following information to enable estimating the size of the courier vehicle, the usage of the vehicle, and the manpower involved.

a. What is the typical volume of material moved by courier service under this task?

Ans: The volume fluctuates from day to day. The current requirement has changed from the current contract based on fluctuation in usage by USPTO.

b. What is the maximum volume of material moved by courier service under this task?

Ans: See answer to Question 401a.

c. What size are the bins moved by courier service, and how many are carried at a time?

Ans: There are no bins associated with courier service.

d. Are the bins provided as GFE?

Ans: No, see answer to 401c.

e. Are the bins wheeled or carried?

Ans: See answer to 401d.

f. The RFP’s video shows a large bin on wheels. Is this the standard GFE bin for courier service?

Ans: No, this large bin on wheel belongs to the mail center contractor which is a separate vendor.

g. The RFP's video also shows smaller colored bins being hand-carried. Are these bins also GFE?

Ans: Yes.

h. Is courier service required regularly at the "Franconia warehouse" mentioned in RFP Section C.2.1.(a)?

Ans: No, see answer to Question #306c and #309b.

i. Is courier service required periodically at the "Franconia warehouse" mentioned in RFP Section C.2.1.(a)?

Ans: No.

j. Does USPTO support an equitable adjustment for "adding delivery locations"?

Ans: No. Offerors are asked to submit a firm fixed price that encompasses all associated costs and performance risks.

402. Is the link to the video listed under Section L, L.5 accurate? The video will not load.

Ans: Yes. We have not received any complaints regarding the video.